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REMINISCENCES

By

JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

AUTHOR OF 'A HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES' ETC.

'From the table of my memory'

IN TWO VOLUMES

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CHAPTER XXV

ON THE STUMP IN AMERICA

I MENTIONED in the last chapter the fact that I had lost the chance of seeing Lord Randolph Churchill in office, because I had to cross the Atlantic and spend some months in the United States and Canada. In 1886 Mr. Gladstone brought forward his first Home Rule measure for Ireland, and as every one knows, the measure was defeated in the House of Commons, because a large number of Liberal members, who had previously followed Mr. Gladstone's leadership, made up their minds to abandon his guidance, and to join with the Conservatives in opposing his Bill. My colleagues in the Irish National party thought it would be of advantage to our cause if one of us were to go out to the United States and Canada to tell the history of the Home Rule measure and its defeat, and to plead for the sympathy and support of the American and Canadian public on behalf of our national claims. I was asked to undertake the duty; and I did so all the more readily because I had long been contemplating another lecturing tour in America. I say another lecturing tour because I had twice before devoted a season

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to the work of addressing the American public from the lecturer's platform. In 1886 I made it known that my principal object was to speak for Home Rule, while I was quite willing to address associations and audiences which did not concern themselves with politics on any subjects coming within my own range of literary reading and study. I left England in the early autumn of 1886, and did not return until the Parliamentary Session of 1887 was well on its way.

Now the work of a lecturer in the United States is, in any case, one which brings with it some mental anxiety and very much physical fatigue. It means travelling almost every day and lecturing almost every night. This meant trouble enough on my first and second lecturing tours, but in those I discoursed merely on literary subjects for the most part, and when I did stray into the region of politics it was simply in the capacity of an observer who tells his audience about men and events which he has seen as an observer, and not about political actions and movements in which he has taken part. But when I went out on my third tour I went chiefly as a man with a mission, if I may use that out-worn conventional phrase, as one who had to plead a political cause, and to speak of events in which he had personally borne a part. Therefore I need hardly say that my arrival in any Canadian or American city or town was sure to become the occasion for a sort of demonstration on the part of my own countrymen and of their American sympathisers. I do not want to be accused of exaggeration, and therefore I shall not attempt to say how many speeches it might, now and then, have become my duty to make in the course of a single day before I had arrived within measurable distance of the platform from which I had to deliver my

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appointed discourse at night. Very likely there was a parting demonstration in the morning to cheer the lecturer and bid him farewell as he left by the train for his onward journey; and there was much shaking of hands, and there were a few words of gratitude to be spoken to the crowd before the conductor gave his signal for 'all aboard,' and the train steamed out of the station. Then it may be that the train stopped at two or three important stations on the way, and there again, at each of these, was the 'demonstration,' and there were the kindly hands to be clasped, and the expected speech to be delivered. When the journey's end was reached, there was in all probability a procession with music and banners to the hotel, and there were the interviewers at the hotel, and very likely a welcoming banquet to give the orator strength and courage for his task, and there were speeches made after the banquet; and all this was only the preliminary to the lecture itself. Let us for the moment suppose the lecture delivered. Then followed the kindly congratulations and shaking of hands, and in only too many cases there came another banquet and more speeches, and in all probability more interviewers awaiting one before he withdrew for the night.

Now the American interviewing system is an institution that defies exaggeration. You may read about it as much as you like; you may study what seem to be the most extravagant and highly-coloured pictures of it; but until you become acquainted with the institution itself you never can know what it is in reality. In my former lecture tours I was only an obscure individual who had written a book or two, and whose name was just beginning to be faintly known in literature; but on my last tour I was a man with a political mission, a

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man who had just come from the heat of a battle in which all the civilised world felt an interest; and therefore I could not possibly complain if the interviewer marked me for his own. Indeed, I have personally nothing to complain of: the interviewers were all very civil and considerate, so far as their business would allow them to be considerate; but then, there were so many of them, and they appeared everywhere, and they would take no denial, and the life of a lecturing tourist on the American continent owns no soft hours of selfish privacy. The man endowed with personal vanity may indeed mistake all this for greatness, and extract happiness even from his very sufferings; but my personal vanity did not, to use Lord Randolph Churchill's phrase 'take that form' — I did not regard the presence of the interviewers as a conclusive evidence of my individual greatness; and so I had simply to accept the martyrdom without the consolation of the crown.

After a few lectures in the city and the State of New York, my course, for a time, branched off into Canada. I have many delightful memories of that Canadian visit. I had been a good deal in Canada before; but one can hardly see Quebec and Montreal and the St. Lawrence and Ottawa too often. In my mind, the view of Quebec, on its rock above the streams, stands second in beauty among the wonderful sights that nature has shown to me. First of all I put Nauplia in Greece, with its sea and its Argive hills, the hills along whose tops flashed the beacon fires that told of the fall of Troy. Next I put Quebec, and then I let Naples and Smyrna and the Bosphorus and the Danube at Buda-Pesth come in where they can. I do not ask my readers to accept my classification: I continue on terms of friendship with some intimates who pertinaciously refuse to accept it,

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but I give it as mine, and I am prepared to stand by it. Therefore, it will easily be understood that I was glad to visit Canada again; and I have some memories of new acquaintanceships made during that latest visit, which are likely to last my time. In Toronto I was the guest of my friend Edward Blake, the eminent Canadian, who, because of his Irish origin, thought it nothing to give up his splendid position at the head of the Bar and at the head of the Liberal party in Canada, and come over to London to fight the battle of Home Rule in the ranks of the Irish Parliamentary party. I am unwilling to say here all that I might say of my friend and colleague, Edward Blake, of his abilities, of his eloquence, of his absolute unselfishness, of his noble self-sacrificing devotion to the cause which he believes to be just. Often when I have heard the Irish National party denounced as a band of rebels, I have thought of Edward Blake, and I have remembered some stirring lines which I read many years ago at the time when Garibaldi was made a prisoner by the soldiers of Victor Emmanuel. 'And, King, if this thy rebel be, tell us who is thy friend.' I do not suppose Edward Blake would much care to be compared with Garibaldi, and I am not making any such inappropriate comparison. Only the thought has sometimes occurred to me that after reading some of these denunciations, one might fairly say to England, 'If this thy rebel be, tell us who is thy friend.' I shall say nothing further about Edward Blake, except that I shall never forget the bright days I passed in his hospitable Canadian home.

My way led me soon back into the United States again; and I found many old friends alive and flourishing in the principal cities. I visited Cyrus Field in New York, and had many long talks with him and with

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Whitelaw Reid, who had by this time grown to be a man of commanding position and high influence in the State, and, indeed, all over the States. When I knew him first he had only just come to settle in New York City, and was at the very beginning of that career which has since proved such a success in journalism, in politics, and in diplomacy. Then, once again, I met my old friend George William Curtis, the editor of 'Harper's Monthly Magazine,' one of the most highly-cultivated literary men, and one of the most brilliant lecturers I have ever known. Curtis's mind was literally steeped in all the best English literature from Chaucer down to his own time. To hear him read Arthur Clough's poem 'Green Fields of England' would have been enough, I think, to make any born Englishman in America feel the tenderest pang of home-sickness. I have heard the poem read by more than one Englishman; but never by any as it was read by Curtis. He was a most successful lecturer, one of the men, indeed, who, like Wendell Phillips, made lecturing a branch of the fine arts. Curtis was so successful a popular lecturer that he could well afford to tell a story which reflected some doubt on his popularity, and there was nothing which he enjoyed more than amusing his friends with such a tale. One story I remember well, which I heard him tell during my earlier stay in America. He had just given a lecture in what we should call a provincial town; and it seemed to him that his audience were not as deeply interested in the subject of the discourse as he could have wished. Before leaving the hall he privately communicated his doubts to the chairman of the lecture committee, and received from him the reassuring declaration, 'Well, Mr. Curtis, I give you my word that I did not find the lecture so very tedious, by any means.'

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Before starting off on my lecturing tour this last time, I made the acquaintance in New York of Mr. Chauncey M. Depew, whose name is now almost as well known in the West End circles of London as it is in the great city by the Hudson. Chauncey Depew is one of the most eloquent public speakers in the United States, and that is saying a good deal for a public speaker. His eloquence can take two different forms: he can deliver a speech on some grave and great political or social question which might favourably compare for argument, for style, and for delivery, with any public oration one is likely to hear in modern days. As an after-dinner speaker, he is one of the very few men whom I should place on a level just a little lower than that held by Charles Dickens. I think if I were to indulge in comparisons drawn from home experiences I should say that Chauncey Depew resembles Lord Rosebery more than any other English public man whom I could name. Lord Rosebery, as we all know, can deliver a thrilling and commanding speech on some great subject from the public platform or from the benches of the House of Lords; and he can also keep an after-dinner audience in perfect delight by the exuberance of his fancy and the sparkle of his wit. Chauncey Depew can perform the same feats, and seems, like Lord Rosebery, able to perform them at any moment, when the occasion summons him to give full play to his powers of argument, of eloquence and humour.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Depew very often in London at a later day; and I never met him without bringing away a lively recollection of some bright saying which had flashed from his lips. I well recollect how, on one occasion, he delighted a somewhat weary dinner-party, and stopped the flow of what threatened

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to be an interminable story by one gentle interruption, put in a mildly questioning form. Among the company was a travelled man who had been all over the Far West, and had wonderful stories to tell of his skill, his daring, and his perilous adventures. On the occasion to which I refer he was giving us a long account of some terrible midnight ride of his through a western forest, where to escape from the path of the bear was only to come upon the lair of the Red Indian. At the opening of the story he took care to tell us that he was mounted upon a mustang which none but himself could ride, and which bore the characteristic name of Lightning Jack; then he went on to picture the dangers of his ride, until he told us that he had reached some spot of unknown peril, and here, he said with dramatic solemnity, 'I dismounted.' 'At a suggestion from Lightning Jack?' Mr. Depew blandly interjected. The effect was electrical; nobody waited for the answer; nobody wanted the answer; it would have been hopeless to think of continuing the story. The insinuation that the indomitable rider had alighted at a suggestion from Lightning Jack was too much for the gravity of us all, and we heard no more of the tale.

In Boston, too, I found some old, and made some new, acquaintances. I do not know whether I should call Thomas Wentworth Higginson an old or a new acquaintance, because I had met him years before, and had heard him speak in public, but it was only after my first visit to America that I had an opportunity of being brought into close association with him. I met him often in London during the interval. Thomas Wentworth Higginson is one of the most charming essayists known to our modern English days. I should rank him as an essayist with Robert Louis Stevenson, and, if

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we may go outside the English-speaking circle, I should rank him with François Coppée. But Higginson had a career much more varied than that of Stevenson or of Coppée. He began his public life as a Unitarian minister and preacher, and soon won name and fame. But the great Civil War broke out, and Higginson was a devoted abolitionist and a zealot for the cause of the Union. He resigned his pulpit and became a soldier. He was determined to show that the negro was not wanting in courage to fight for those who were sacrificing much to free him from slavery; and he raised a black regiment, of which he obtained the command. He took his regiment into the field, and in many a terrible encounter he showed that his negroes could follow him wherever there was fighting to be done. He held to his post in the campaign until he was so severely wounded that he had to leave the field; and before long the war was over and the Union was restored.

Higginson went back into civil life; but he did not resume his position as a minister and a preacher. He took an active part in politics; he delivered lectures, and he wrote books; and he was successful in everything he attempted. Few men have crammed more varied work into the course of a lifetime; and when last I met Higginson he did not seem as if years and work had told heavily on him. There was a certain youthfulness about him, in his spirits, in his manners, in his way of looking at life, a genial freshness and hopefulness which still seemed to love prospect more than retrospect, such as we rarely find among those who have known many changes, have gone through much, and see the evening shadows deepening as they descend the hill. That time when I last saw him was during the visit which he paid to London nearly two

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years ago, when he came to see me and we had a good long talk over old days and old friends, and over the brightening hopes of a cordial understanding between England and the United States in the future. Higginson is one of the many American literary men who have made a profound study of English literature, and who always turn to it with sympathy and devotion. I should be a good deal puzzled if I were called upon to name any Englishman of my acquaintance who has studied more and with more profit in the best schools of English letters than Wentworth Higginson has done.

Another American whom I came to know for the first time in Boston, during this latest tour of mine, was Edward Everett Hale, an author whose books have given many an hour of genuine delight to Englishmen as well as to Americans. I remember that when I reached Boston on this Home Rule mission of mine I received a characteristic letter from Mr. Hale. He wrote to remind me of some letter or speech of Matthew Arnold's, in which, after his lecturing season in the States, Arnold had said that he had not met any educated American who was in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. 'Now,' Hale wrote to me, 'I think I am entitled to say that I can read and write, and I am entirely in favour of Home Rule for Ireland; and most of my reading and writing friends are of the same opinion.' I need hardly say that I was delighted by this genial, humorous, and characteristic way of giving me some encouragement on the part of himself and his friends. I met Mr. Hale shortly after at the house of Mrs. James T. Fields, whom I have already mentioned in this book; and the meeting under that roof brought melancholy recollections with it. Mrs. Fields was the widow of James T. Fields,

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the eminent Boston publisher, whose name was almost as well known in the literary circles of London as in those of Boston and of New York. In Mr. Fields' house, during my first and second visit to America, I had met many distinguished men and women, and the house had always seemed to me one of the centres of the intellectual life of Boston. I remember that it was in that house I met for the last time my friend Bayard Taylor, the famous American traveller, scholar, and writer, who had made German literature a study before the increasing popularity of Coleridge and of Carlyle had awakened the mind of England and America to a knowledge of the fact that Goethe was the greatest poet the world had known since Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton. Bayard Taylor was the very first of the race of modern travellers: the men who measured their travels not by countries but by continents. I think I was attracted to him in the first instance less even by his travels, which were wonderful at that time, than by the fact that he had given to the world the first English translation of that second part of 'Faust' which some readers even still persist in regarding as a separate poem, the study of which is not essential to a proper understanding of the first part. I had known Bayard Taylor well, both in New York and in Boston, during my earlier visits to the States: he died in 1878, American minister to the Court of Berlin. As I have said, the last time I ever met him was at the house of Mrs. Fields in the same room where, on this later visit of which I am speaking, I met Edward Everett Hale.

We left the house together, Mr. Hale and my daughter and I, and we wandered through many Boston streets. Mr. Hale showed us over the Free Public Library, which was even then an institution almost

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unique in its way, but which since has been imitated in some of its most useful and popular regulations in Liverpool and Birmingham and other of our great provincial cities; but which has yet, I am afraid, met with no adequate imitation in London. There are probably some of my readers who have not yet read Mr. Hale's marvellous piece of work, imagination and realism combined and compressed together, the story of 'The Man without a Country.' To anyone who has not yet read the book, I can only offer the recommendation that he should get it and study it as soon as possible; he will find in it something not to be surpassed, even in the most thrilling pages of Hawthorne.

As I have mentioned the name of Hawthorne I may say that during this visit to Boston I made several pilgrimages to Salem, the little seaport town in Massachusetts, out of which Hawthorne created the story of 'The Scarlet Letter,' and in which the traveller may still see the House of the Seven Gables. I had met Hawthorne when I was a very young man living in Liverpool. He was then American consul in the town—it had not, at that time, obtained the more dignified name of city—and he led for the most part a very lonely life there. Society in Liverpool in those days was not very congenial with Hawthorne's melancholy and imaginative temperament; and he never put himself out of his way to seek for friends or acquaintances. I have often met him in Bold Street, one of Liverpool's crowded and fashionable streets, and he always seemed to me a strange and picturesque figure, little in keeping with that showy, bustling, commonplace thoroughfare. In the chill autumnal evenings he was usually wrapped in a great grey shawl, a sort of covering not very common even then among Englishmen, and he often had his

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little son, Julian, trotting by his side. I considered myself highly fortunate indeed to have got an opportunity now and then of talking with Hawthorne; and was very proud when I found myself able to draw him into talk. He was a very silent man, could sit silent a whole evening in any company where there were many strangers. As Emerson said of him, 'he rode well his black horse of the night.' But I had the good fortune to hear him talk, and to be admitted to talk with him; and I soon found that when he was in the humour he could speak as one might have expected the author of 'The Blithedale Romance' to speak. Hawthorne was one of the handsomest men I have ever seen. His broad and noble forehead, his splendidly modelled face, his thick, dark hair, and the burning depths of his dark eyes made up a picture which instantly challenged the attention of anyone who chanced to see him. During this visit to Boston of which I have been speaking, I had the pleasure of meeting his son, Julian Hawthorne, again. We had met many times, indeed, since the far-off days when I used to see him trotting by his father's side in Bold Street, Liverpool. Julian Hawthorne had been a resident of London for many years, and was on close terms of friendship with my family and me. He made for himself a distinct success in literature; and some of his novels show a thorough originality of conception and a genuine artistic skill. He was at one time a resident of what I may call the Bedford Park colony near London, a delightful kind of artistic settlement within the frontiers of which it was fondly hoped that the commonplace was never to be permitted to intrude. Julian Hawthorne had much of his father's personal picturesqueness and grace as he had much of his father's literary endowment. He had a large circle of friends in London, and

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when he went back to settle in his own country we all missed him.

As I have been talking of the historic town of Salem, I may perhaps mention the fact that one house in the town, the home of my friend Professor Morse, contains what I believe is generally acknowledged to be a finer private collection of Japanese pottery than any other either in or out of Japan. I remember dining once in a London house and finding that my nearest neighbour across the table was Ernest Hart, a famous student of Japanese art, who, I regret to say, is no longer living. The conversation turned naturally enough on Japanese china and pottery; and I was fired with an ambition to show that I knew something about it, and also, if I could, to arouse the astonishment and envy of my accomplished friend on the other side of the table. So I mentioned in a careless tone that I had but lately returned from America, and that I believed that I had seen there the finest private collection of Japanese pottery to be found in the world. My opposite neighbour quietly replied, 'Yes, yes, of course, I know what you mean; everybody who takes any interest in the subject knows all about that: you mean Professor Morse's collection at Salem, Massachusetts.' Of course, I was very glad that I had not made a blunder; but I gave up all idea of astonishing the expert in Japanese art after that, my first and only attempt.

Meanwhile, I must return to my lecturing tour and my Home Rule mission. I went up and down the States a good deal; but I did not get farther westward than the Missouri, and had not time to renew my acquaintance with the Far West and San Francisco. I found old acquaintances almost everywhere, and had many a cordial welcome such as kindly Americans know

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how to give ; and I addressed meetings enough to satisfy a man not athirst for public speaking, if he were never to address a meeting again during the whole course of his life. I remember being once considerably disturbed by a tribute of public welcome which I received during the course of my tour, and which even still I can hardly recall without a certain tremor at the thought of how easily things may go wrong, and how the lecturer might have become an object for the frivolous merriment of the profane. In one American town where I was to deliver an address I was told by the chairman of the organising committee that immediately after my lecture I was to receive on the platform a bouquet of flowers as an offering of good-will on the part of some of the resident ladies. The chairman also informed me in a low tone that he was told that it was to be presented by the prettiest little girl in the place ; and he added confidentially, ‘I think you had better give her a kiss ; it would look graceful.’ I readily agreed to the suggestion, fully expecting, as the chairman afterwards told me he fully expected, that the presentation would be made by some charming little creature of ten or twelve years. The discourse in due time came to a close, and then the chairman announced the presentation of the bouquet, and then the bouquet itself appeared on the platform, borne by a very tall and very handsome girl of twenty at least — a girl decidedly taller than the orator of the evening. As I became aware of this commanding presence, I said to my own soul, ‘There will be no kissing here if it depends upon me.’ I also said to my own soul, ‘Suppose the young lady should resist the proffered caress, and there should be a struggle on the platform, an unseemly struggle, what would the papers say about it next morning?’

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And so the orator of the evening took the bouquet and expressed his thanks in words as eloquent as he could command, and the ceremonial came to an end without the occurrence of anything that might, in the solemn words which Gibbon uses in one of his chapters, 'bring a smile to the lip of the thoughtless, or a blush to the cheek of the fair.'

During my wanderings in New York State I spent a day or two at Cornell University with my old friend Professor Moses Coit Tyler. I had known my friend in former years when he was Professor at Ann Arbor in the State of Michigan. That was during my former visits to the States; and I stayed more than once in his Ann Arbor home. Indeed, I brought him and his home and the university town where he then lived into a novel which I wrote many years ago; and I described the town under the name of New Padua. I did my best to give a true picture of life in that university town on the banks of the picturesque Huron River, and of the bright intellectual society with which I became acquainted there, and of the genial Professor himself and his happy home. I had met him several times in New York and also in London, and now I came upon him at Cornell University. Tyler was a man who had a very thorough knowledge of English life and of English parties and politics. He settled down in London more than thirty years ago, and made a study of it; and he has quite lately published a book reproducing his impressions of our social life and of our political ways, of the House of Commons and its great orators. The book is one of remarkable value quite apart from its distinct literary merit, because it tells us what an observant and sympathetic American thought about our political struggles and our political parties at the time

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when the great franchise question and the great Irish question were made by the genius and the energy of Gladstone the vital subjects of debate in the English Parliament. Moses Tyler is one of the Americans with whom the study of English literature is a congenial task and a natural delight; he is a thoroughly patriotic American, but an American whose patriotism takes no narrow form, and welcomes as a part of American training and culture every idea that the Old World has still to offer. I have never spent hours more delightful than those which I passed in his house at Ann Arbor in the old days, and more lately at his home within the limits of Cornell University.

I had known at one time in New York Ezra Cornell, the founder of the university, an institution which was specially intended to combine literary and scientific culture with the teaching which fits young men for the hard work, even the mechanical hard work, of life. Ezra Cornell had spent much money in founding the university; and I believe its results have well repaid his generosity and his care. He was an odd kind of man, and in appearance and manner might have seemed as if designed by nature to be the very type of a certain kind of hard-headed American to be seen in comedy and in caricature. Any comic dramatist who wanted to put on the stage a benevolent and bounteous American whose appearance, voice, gestures, and words might have made him seem the very embodiment of gruffness, hard-fistedness, and 'cussedness' generally, could not have done better than draw Ezra Cornell to the life. He was undoubtedly a benevolent and generous man, but one who only met him casually, and judged him from the outside, might as well have thought of associating Ralph Nickleby with beneficence

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and philanthropy as Ezra Cornell. My stay at Cornell was all too short; but it left me memories which must always abide with me, of delightful talks with Professor Tyler, and with President Andrew White, then at the head of the university; talks about literature and art, about politics and public men, about the newest books in America, and the oldest books in England. Among the literary treasures which Andrew White was proud of showing to his friends were certain proof sheets of the Waverly novels, which had come into his hands, I think, through the Constable family, one or two of whose members had settled in New York, and which bore the corrections made by the hand of Sir Walter Scott himself. We passed some pleasant hours inspecting and talking over these invaluable relics.

I must close this chapter with a reminiscence of my last night in New York. That night indeed was the last I had to spend in America. The steamer for Southampton was to leave the river early next morning, and my daughter and I had resolved to go on board about midnight. In the meantime, however, there was the evening to be spent, and a kindly American friend made a happy suggestion as to the best means of spending it. His idea was that we should go to Daly's Theatre and see 'The Taming of the Shrew,' with Ada Rehan as Katherine. We welcomed the idea; I had never seen Ada Rehan before: this, be it remembered, was in March, 1887, and though the Daly company had appeared in London during two seasons, I had not been to their theatre nor, I think, did Miss Rehan during those seasons play any of her greater parts. Therefore, I had only a general idea that Miss Rehan's acting was fresh, forcible, and charming; but I had no clearly defined picture of her or of her capacity, in my mind. We

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went to the theatre, and the prologue and the first scene gave conclusive evidence as to the dramatic capacity of the company and the artistic skill of the manager. But Miss Rehan was not in the first scene; and we were impatient to see Miss Rehan. Then at last a curtain is drawn aside, and there rushed upon the stage, not Miss Rehan, but the very Katherine of 'The Taming of the Shrew,' Katherine herself in living form, panting and trembling with rage, possessed by internal passion as by a demon, and yet every movement, every gesture telling of natural grace and womanliness and beauty. Before the actress had spoken a single word I felt certain that I was in the presence of true dramatic genius. No art and no skill and no study could have made that impersonation without genius itself to give it inspiration and life. As the play went on, the more our admiration grew; from first to last the idea was conveyed that the Katherine before us was a woman of generous instincts and noble nature, but simply a woman possessed by a demon, and that it needed only some exorcising hand to break the spell, conjure away the demon, and leave Katherine to us in her native womanliness and loveliness. I have seen many great actors and actresses in my time; but I never was more impressed or more convinced than by my first sight of Miss Ada Rehan as Katherine in 'The Taming of the Shrew.' I have seen Miss Rehan often and often since that night so memorable to me: I have seen her in all, or almost all, her impersonations; and I believe her to be, on the whole, the finest English-speaking actress I ever saw. I have made Miss Rehan's acquaintance since that time, and I hope to be always accounted among her friends. Through the kindness of Mr. Augustin Daly, from whom I have received many kindnesses, I made Miss

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Rehan's acquaintance that very evening during one of the intervals between the acts. My daughter and I talked of little else, as we drove to the steamer that night, than the wonderful acting of Miss Rehan; and we talked of it many a time during that voyage from New York to Southampton.

CHAPTER XXVI

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE

WHILE I was still in America, I read the news of Lord Iddesleigh's death. Lord Iddesleigh, I need hardly say, was known throughout the greater and the brighter part of his public career as Sir Stafford Northcote. I read of his death with deep regret on personal as well as on public grounds. I had known him for several years, and the longer I knew him the greater became my respect and regard for him. I have already mentioned my first meeting with him in private, on the day when in the same house I met Lord Randolph Churchill and made his personal acquaintance. Sir Stafford Northcote — I still prefer to speak of him by the name which was best known to me — was a man whose character did honour to public life. He was one of those who can stand firmly to their own political convictions without ever allowing political convictions to force them into personal antagonism. Secure of the uprightness of his own motives, he was quite willing to admit and to recognise the same uprightness of motive in men whose political convictions were utterly opposed to his, and who passed their lives in advocating schemes which he passed his life in opposing. During my earlier years in the House of Commons the political party with which I was associated was incessantly brought into collision with Sir Stafford Northcote, whether he was acting as

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leader of the House of Commons or only as leader of the Opposition. While he was leader of the House that campaign of obstruction began which led to some of the most exciting and painful scenes that have occurred in Parliament during my recollection. Sir Stafford never lost his head or his temper, never, that I can remember, ascribed an unworthy motive to his opponents or endeavoured to hold them up to the ignoble hatred of unreflecting and inconsiderate outsiders. Some of his own followers, indeed, ascribed to him a want of strength in dealing with the troubles of the time; but the truth was that those troubles had a deeper root than the hard words of any Minister could have got at. It used to be commonly said at the time that Sir Stafford Northcote was not strong enough for the place; but the House had stronger leaders in his time, who found, as well as he had found, that the difficulties with the Irish Party were not to be removed by any autocratic action on the part of a Minister or a majority.

I may say, for myself, that during many years it was my good fortune to meet Sir Stafford Northcote very often, outside as well as inside the House of Commons; and I never found that political antagonism made the slightest difference in our personal relations. It was part of the man's genial nature to give willingly to other men the credit of having purposes as sincere and honourable as his own, and he was ready to meet on terms of cordial friendship men whom he hardly ever saw in the same division lobby with himself. He was a charming talker, and he had that rare gift of sympathy which enables a man to enter into and appreciate the tastes and the feelings of other men. He was fond of reading, and had a genuine love for literature. He had a better understanding of art than many a man has who

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contrives to pass off as an authority on all questions of artistic culture. Somebody asked him once in my hearing what were his chief subjects of interest; and, after a moment's consideration, he answered, with a good-humoured assumption of gravity, that his favourite subjects were books, pictures, and views of life. 'But,' it was suggested, 'you are interested in politics, and, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, you know all about figures, and you have said nothing of these as favourite subjects.' 'No,' Sir Stafford replied; 'when I speak of favourite subjects, I mean the subjects that come up in a man's mind when he has nothing to do at the time, and is not in painful preparation for something that will have to be done in the immediate future.'

His mind seemed to be always open to new ideas. I think that in that way he had even a sort of curious toleration for the obstruction which delayed and perplexed and sometimes convulsed the House of Commons. It interested him as a new force in political life: interested him as a naturalist might be interested in some new agency discovered by a chemist. He was not content, as some of his colleagues were, merely to denounce it and to rage at it: he was anxious to know what it was all about and what it really aimed at and proposed to itself to accomplish. He had not the convenient art which other men might have possessed of getting rid of the whole subject by setting down the obstructionists as knaves or madmen, and publicly proclaiming that he regarded them as one or the other or both combined. He was fond of hearing of anything new that was going on in literature or in art, and could enter with the keenest interest into any account of some new literary school, some new fashion among artists, some new fad among patrons of art, some new craze among

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the æsthetes. He was fond of the theatre, and was only too happy when he got the chance of relieving the weary monotony of political life by a night at the play. I have sometimes been in deep converse with him as we paced through one of the lobbies or corridors of the House of Commons, and have thought that some of the passers-by might perhaps have been a little surprised if they could have known that the leader of the Tory Party in that House was only talking with the Irish Nationalist member about some new novel or some new play.

There was at one time a well-known member of the House of Lords whose eccentricities of manner and of speech were so marked as to lead his fellow-peers, and such strangers as might happen to be in the galleries, to expect an extraordinary scene whenever his lordship rose to address the Chamber. I had become slightly acquainted with the noble lord, and for some reason, wholly beyond my understanding, he had got into a way of writing long letters to me which he requested me to read to Sir Stafford Northcote. Why he did not write directly to Sir Stafford I could not get to know. Why he singled me out as the medium of intercommunication was to me an equal mystery, except, indeed, on the assumption, not very flattering to my self-esteem, that he naturally regarded me as the one member of the House of Commons who might most fittingly be chosen as his intellectual representative. Anyhow, when the first of the letters reached me I went up one night and sat beside Sir Stafford Northcote on the front bench of Opposition, and there confided my mission to him, and read to him the passages of the letter designed for his instruction. Sir Stafford listened with a grave smile, but indulged in no expression of surprise: listened, indeed, as if it were the most natural thing in the world that

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such a communication should be addressed to him in such a way. Then, when I had got through the letter, he quietly said, 'Lord Blank is a very singular man; I suppose he did not explain to you what he thought I could do in the matter?' I answered that I had received no explanation whatever. 'Take my advice,' he said; 'and do not ask for one.' I pledged myself to follow his counsel; and I kept my pledge. I received further letters from the same noble hand; but I kept them to myself. One night, however, as I was passing the front Opposition bench in order to get into one of the lobbies when a division was called, I came against Sir Stafford Northcote. He asked me with a bland smile of amused good-humour whether I had received any further communications from our noble friend. I replied that I had, but that I had forbore to bring them under Sir Stafford's notice. 'That was kind and thoughtful of you,' he said; 'but things are sometimes so dull here that even Lord Blank's letters might be a pleasing sort of interruption.' I told him with perfect sincerity that the letters were all at his service; but he assumed an air of virtuous self-denial and declined the proffered distraction. More than once when I met him afterwards he asked me if I had yet come to any understanding as to what the noble lord wanted him to do; and when I explained that my mind was no clearer on the subject than it had been before, he expressed his regret for my sake that there was not even the plot for a sensation story to be got out of the whole business. I only mention this anecdote to illustrate the temper of perfect good humour and of curious interest with which Sir Stafford Northcote could enter into the whimsicality of so odd a development of the passion for letter-writing.

Sir Stafford had among his other literary tastes a

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thoroughly artistic admiration for the great English dramatists who were the contemporaries of Shakespeare. He had also a strong affection for the novels of Sir Walter Scott. I remember how he delighted some members of the House of Commons, and rather mystified not a few others, by a very happy citation from one of Scott's more modern romances. It was, I think, when some question of order was before the House, and Sir Stafford had to speak, and in the course of his speech had to comment on the tactics of a conspicuous member who, while always professing to obey the authority of the Speaker, yet sometimes contrived to have his own way in spite of the ruling of the Chair. Sir Stafford quoted from a humorous passage in which a precocious urchin is described as having told the narrator that he had been given half-a-crown by somebody on a promise that he would not go and play it away at pitch and toss. 'And, of course,' said the narrator, 'you disobeyed him.' 'Na, na,' is the youthful casuist's reply; 'I didna disobey him: I played it away at neevie-neevie nick-nack.' I remember once talking with Sir Stafford about a Latin quotation introduced into 'Kenilworth' — 'Quid hoc ad Iphicli boves?' Sir Stafford asked me if I could say where Scott had found the Latin words; but I was unable to give him any answer. We were both clear enough as to the identity of the particular Iphiclus whose oxen were in question, but we could not name the writer in whose pages Scott must have found the cited words. Sir Stafford told me that he had asked many accomplished classical scholars the same question; but that none of them was able to give him an answer. Perhaps some of my readers may be more successful; I can only leave it to their better knowledge, to put itself in evidence.

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One night in the House of Commons a somewhat amusing incident occurred. Sir Stafford Northcote's son, the present Lord Iddesleigh, was making a speech which had to do with the policy and the tactics of Mr. Parnell; and he said that the House must not take Mr. Parnell's threats too seriously, that his mode of action was often only 'pretty Fanny's way' and boded no grave danger to the State. Sir Stafford Northcote murmured: "'Pretty Fanny's way;'" another Parnellism; and some of those who sat on the front bench near him were puzzled. The explanation was that the line about 'pretty Fanny's way' comes from one of the poems of Parnell the contemporary of Swift, and one of the ancestors of the Parnell who was then leading the Irish National Party. Few men had a better memory for striking scraps of literature than Sir Stafford Northcote, and few men when delivering a speech could brighten a dull unpromising subject more happily by appropriateness of unexpected and humorous citation. None the less was he a deep thinker on the gravest questions. If his early impulses and surroundings and education had allowed him to be a Radical, he would, I think, have made a most distinguished member of that which was once known as the Philosophical Radical school. I can easily think of him as a fitting companion of Grote and Sir William Molesworth and John Stuart Mill. He never could bring his mind down to the average level of the heavy, old, steady-going Tories by whom he was habitually surrounded.

I think, somehow, that the House of Commons and even the members of his own party in general failed to do justice to Stafford Northcote's intellectual capacity as a statesman. I do not say that he could, in any case, have been the pilot to weather the storm when

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some tempest of unusual force was raging; but pilots of this kind are very rare in the history of statesmanship, and even in the case of some to whom such praise is given, it may be fairly doubted whether favouring chance had not as much to do as skill with the bringing of the ship into harbour. Sir Stafford's manner as a speaker was against him in a House which delights in sudden effects; which is rather impatient of quiet and philosophical exposition; is apt to turn its attention away from that kind of speaking which has been described as thinking aloud, and prefers the most audacious paradox to anything that bears the faintest semblance of platitude. Sir Stafford Northcote's style was often that of a man who is thinking aloud, and even where his conclusions proved themselves to be just, it was not always easy to get the House to follow his reasoning with sympathetic attention, and wait until the lesson or the lecture had completed its development. For myself, I may say that there were very few speakers in the House of Commons to whom I could listen with closer attention and deeper interest than I could to Sir Stafford Northcote. He was not an orator in the higher sense of the word, and never professed to be anything of the kind; indeed, he had not the voice or the manner which is necessary to make a Parliamentary orator. Undoubtedly, a man may hold a Parliamentary assembly at will, and compel it to listen in breathless attention to all that he has to say, even though he be wanting in all the graces of elocution. Sir Stafford Northcote had a far better voice than Sheil, a much better manner than Thiers, and he had none of the defects of articulation which told so heavily against Edward Bulwer Lytton; and yet Sheil, Thiers, and Lytton could hold great Parliamentary assemblies enthralled. I am inclined to

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think that if a man be not endowed by nature with great gifts of voice and manner he has a better chance of success as a speaker if he challenges attention at once by a distinctly bad voice and a distinctly unattractive manner.

Anyone who could make up his mind to listen to Sir Stafford Northcote for the sake of the thoughts which he put into argumentative form, and the charm of the literary style in which he embodied them, must have come to hold in high admiration the intellectual and statesmanlike capacity of the man. His style was always good; he never used too many words; he never became involved in his sentences, he always seemed to have the most clear understanding of what he wished to say; he never seemed to be speaking merely because it was his duty as the leader of a Party to make a speech on this or that particular occasion; and he never seemed to be compelled by the exigencies of debate to utter a sentence which had not a thought beneath it. He sometimes reminded me, not in himself, but in his political position, of the late Lord Derby, not the Rupert of debate, but the well-instructed, intellectual, philosophical Lord Derby whom most of us can well remember first in the House of Commons and then in the House of Lords. Lord Derby never, in my opinion, obtained that reputation in Parliament to which his intellect, his wide and varied information, and his mastery of political subjects entitled him. He, too, was generally too thoughtful for his audience, ranged too widely for the intellectual sympathies of his hearers, was not one-sided enough to satisfy those towards whom he naturally turned for support. He reminded me sometimes of that American General about whom Nathaniel Hawthorne said that if he had only closed one eye he might

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have won a great victory. If the late Lord Derby could have closed one eye, intellectually speaking, he might have made a great Party leader: the same might be said, I think, with truth, of Sir Stafford Northcote. Of late years, as we all know, some of Sir Stafford's younger followers began to declare him old-fashioned; and nothing is more fatal for a man in Parliament or for a book in a circulating library than to be voted old-fashioned. That was not, however, a bad old fashion to which Sir Stafford Northcote held, and his obedience to which led, no doubt, to his being pushed aside by men who believed they had newer fashions to bring into the market. Certainly, our political life in modern times has not given to us any better illustration of an intellectual, highly-cultured, straightforward, and unassuming Christian gentleman than the late Sir Stafford Northcote.

CHAPTER XXVII

PRINCE NAPOLEON

SOME years ago, I was dining one day at the house of my friend Fletcher Moulton, and the late Lord Coleridge was one of the company. Some talk began—I think it was Lord Coleridge who set it going—about the manner in which each of us had been impressed by the greatness of some particular man. The conversation grew into a sort of agreement that each of us should say in turn what particular man had most impressed him with the sense of intellectual greatness and force of character. The idea was that, in setting forth our heroes, we were to be free from any consideration of comparative worldly success or even of comparative merit—that each should simply say which man had most impressed him by his intellectual power. I remember thinking at the time of a passage in one of Lord Lytton's novels, where the author declares that no matter what great public men one may have known, each of us mortals is sure to have met someone who had not succeeded in conquering public success, and who yet seemed to him to have a greater intellectual force than any of the world's recognised demigods. I cannot remember the names of all the types of intellect chosen by the individual judgment of each member of our pleasant company: I know that the names of Gladstone and of Bismarck stood at the head of the list, and that

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Herbert Spencer and Darwin were not forgotten. Lord Coleridge himself declared that the intellectual force which had most impressed him — and he must have known, I suppose, nearly all the great men of his time — was that of John Henry Newman. For myself, I had the advantage, if it were one, of contributing a name which very much surprised most of the company: the name I gave was that of Prince Napoleon — Napoleon Jerome, the cousin of the Emperor Louis Napoleon, Prince Plon-Plon as he was nicknamed, the man who had for years been described by his enemies, and regarded by many who were not in particular his enemies, as the very type of indolence, sensuality, and cowardice. I stuck to my opinion, however, although I think only two of the company gave it any approval or sympathy. I could only maintain that Prince Napoleon had impressed me more than any other man I had known with a sense of great intellectual capacity, of extended and varied information, and of almost limitless possibilities for public success. This was while Prince Napoleon was still living, but at a time when it had become all but certain to every observer that his public career for good or ill was over.

Two or three years passed on, and I was walking up St. James's Street one evening with my daughter, when we saw a big horse with a big man on its back coming down the street towards us. There was no mistaking the massive forehead, the finely-formed features, now growing somewhat heavy with years and a life of luxury and, for the most part, indolence, the massive powerful jaw, and the well-shaped chin — the whole face a perfect reproduction of the great Napoleon's modelled on what sculptors call the heroic size. There was no mistaking the man. My daughter and I looked at each other

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and from both of us came at once the words 'Prince Napoleon.' Yes, it was Prince Napoleon; and that was the last time he ever visited London; it was certainly the last time I ever saw him.

Many years had passed away since I saw Prince Napoleon for the first time. That first time was in Liverpool, while the Third Empire was still a surprise and a puzzle to Europe, just after the doubtful success of the Crimean War, and before the showy triumph of Solferino. Prince Napoleon had put in with his yacht to the Port of Liverpool — there were not many ports in the world in which that wandering yacht had not made its appearance — and he was to receive a welcome from the corporation of the town. I was then attached to the staff of a Liverpool daily paper, and it became part of my business to give an account of Prince Napoleon's reception at the Town Hall. The scene comes back to my mind as if I had looked upon it the day before yesterday. I see the tall, powerful form of Prince Napoleon; I see the face with its marvellous likeness to that of the great Emperor, the whole figure and face taken together being simply a reproduction of the first Napoleon on a larger scale; and I see the Prince striding rapidly through room after room of the Town Hall, sometimes utterly distancing the leaders of the municipality who would fain accompany him and point out every object of interest for his admiration. The Prince appeared to me to be animated by one grand over-mastering desire, the desire to get through the rooms as quickly as possible and be out of the whole weary business. In good truth, the treasures of the Town Hall did not contain much that could give fresh artistic delight to the owner of the incomparable collection of pictures and statues, and china and pottery and

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curios of all kinds enshrined in the Palais Royal. Prince Napoleon was not inclined, apparently, to take any great pains for the concealment of his opinion with regard to the social duty imposed upon him by the municipal leaders. Indeed, some of these being rather elderly and of heavy frame, had considerable difficulty in keeping up with their honoured guest, and must have had an additional strain put upon their efforts to show a graceful hospitality to the cousin of the great Emperor who had just been England's ally in the field of war. We, the journalists, whose business it was to observe the whole scene, knew little or nothing of Prince Napoleon at the time, beyond the fact that he was the Emperor's cousin; but I well remember our common opinion of the Prince was that he did not seem to make himself quite as agreeable as princes are generally expected to do on occasions of the kind. Some of us who at a later day followed the career of the Prince with observant interest may have thought that that visit to the Liverpool Town Hall was in itself a curious illustration of the temper of the man, who had a way of creating enemies sometimes for lack of that unfailing stock of amiability and graciousness which is supposed to belong to the training of imperial and royal personages everywhere.

Some years after this occurrence in Liverpool a certain sensation was created among artists, and journalists, and literary men, and connoisseurs, and critics, by one of Flandrin's best portraits. Undoubtedly, the portrait was an admirable likeness; no one who had ever seen the original could deny or question that; but yet there was an air, a character, a certain depth of idealised expression about it which seemed to present the subject in a new light, and threw one into a kind of doubt as to

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whether he had ever truly understood the original before. Either the painter had unduly glorified his sitter, or the sitter had impressed upon the artist a true idea of his character and intellect which had never before been revealed to the public at large. The portrait was that of a man of middle age, with a smooth, broad, thoughtful brow, a character of command about the finely-formed, somewhat sensuous lips; chin and nose beautifully moulded—in fact what ladies who write novels would call ‘chiselled’; a face degenerating a little into mere flesh, but still dignified and imposing. Everywhere over the face there was a tone of dissatisfaction, of disappointment, of sullenness mingling strangely with the sensuous characteristics, and conveying somehow the idea of great power and daring ambition unduly repressed by outward conditions, or rendered barren by inward defects, or actually frustrated by failure and fate. ‘A Cæsar out of employment!’ exclaimed the celebrated French author and critic Edmond About. So much there was of the Cæsar in the face that no schoolboy, no Miss in her teens, could have even glanced at it without saying, ‘That is the face of a Bonaparte!’ Were not the features a little too massive, it might have passed for an admirable likeness of the victor of Austerlitz; or, at all events, of the Napoleon of Leipzig or the Hundred Days. Probably any ordinary observer would have at once set it down as a portrait of the great Napoleon, and never thought there could be any doubt about the matter. This was the portrait of Prince Napoleon. I saw it for the first time in Paris, and I think it was afterwards exhibited in London.

The exhibition of the portrait was appropriate in point of time. It must have attracted attention in any case, for the art of the painter was good, and the face

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was one which would have given scope to the skill of any great painter. Events, however, had lent it a distinct advantage. Prince Napoleon was just about that time becoming a mystery in the eyes of the European public. Up to 1860 his character was quite settled in public estimation, as that of his cousin Louis Napoleon had been during his exile in England and in America. The world had set down Louis Napoleon as a dreamy sort of dullard from whom nothing in particular was to be expected; it had disposed of his cousin Prince Napoleon as a sort of better-class anarchist who was only prevented from doing public mischief by his indolence and his delight in private dissipation: that was the settled opinion about him. When a marriage was arranged for him with young Princess Clotilde, daughter of King Victor Emmanuel, a thrill of horror passed through civilised society at the thought of a young Princess, honoured everywhere for her piety and for her beneficence, being handed over in marriage to a husband about twice her age, a man who, according to common repute, was only remarkable for indolence and vice.

But in the meantime other ideas as to the character of Prince Napoleon had been getting about among those who, like myself, took a close and active interest in public events and public men. I had been much impressed by the judgment which Count Cavour had formed of Louis Napoleon's cousin. During the conferences which belonged to the Congress of Paris, Cavour was in constant consultation with Prince Napoleon, and from letters and state papers afterwards published, it was made clear that Cavour had formed a very high opinion of Prince Napoleon's capacity, his force of character and his political daring. Cavour evidently saw in Prince Napoleon the qualities of a man of genius; and,

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indeed, the documents to which I have just made reference, often show us Cavour in the position of one who is urged on to his task by some comrade of even more resolute spirit than himself. Now, there were and are the greatest differences of opinion as to the character of the policy which was developed by Count Cavour; but there can be no difference of opinion whatever as to Cavour's statesmanlike capacity, and his skill in reading the characters of men. Therefore, it came with a surprise to most readers who followed the course of public affairs, when it was made clear that in Prince Napoleon Cavour recognised a master spirit, a man fit to be his own colleague in the task of creating a new Kingdom of Italy under the leadership of the House of Savoy. I had myself an opportunity — one only opportunity — of meeting Cavour during a short visit of his to London; and I remember being greatly struck with the keenness of his judgment as to the characters of some of our own public men. When, therefore, I found from public documents that Count Cavour rated Prince Napoleon as a statesman of high order, I naturally began to take a deep interest in the career of the Prince; and it was, I think, mainly out of these letters and papers of Cavour's that the change was wrought in public opinion which converted Prince Napoleon from a nonentity into a mystery.

Then, again, in Kinglake's 'History of the Crimean War,' the historian, who had ample opportunities of observing the Emperor's cousin during the campaign, finds in him a genius very like that of his uncle the great Napoleon, and especially a surprising faculty of distinguishing between the essentials and the accidents of any situation or question — a faculty which it need hardly be said is one of the rarest and one of the most

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precious in the character of a statesman. Moreover, Kinglake declares that he saw no reason to set down Prince Napoleon as inferior in courage to the first Emperor. I have already mentioned in this book the fact that Richard Cobden, while conducting in Paris the negotiations for a treaty of commerce with France, received the most valuable assistance from Prince Napoleon, and Cobden himself told me that Prince Napoleon was one of the best informed public men, if not indeed the best informed public man, he had known in his life. Something of the same opinion was given to me about the same time by Michel Chevalier, the French political economist, who had also given much assistance to Cobden in the arranging of the Treaty. All this made it more and more clear to my mind that Flandrin's portrait had better interpreted the character of Prince Napoleon than the common opinion of Europe had done; and I looked forward with much eagerness to the possibility of my being able at one time or another to form a judgment for myself.

I may say, too, that I had some conversation with John Bright on the same subject. Bright told me that he generally agreed with Cobden on most things, but that he did not form quite such an estimate as Cobden did of Prince Napoleon's intellect and judgment. Bright admitted that he had not had anything like the opportunities which Cobden had of coming to any conclusion on the subject. But he said — I remember well the expression he used — that the idea he had formed of Prince Napoleon was that of a better educated Sir Robert Peel: not meaning, of course, the great Sir Robert Peel, the second of the name, but the third Sir Robert, whom 'Punch' once contemptuously described as 'the Mountebank Member.' Now, these words of Bright

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rather increased than diminished my interest in the personality of Prince Napoleon. I had formed then, and have held up to the present time, a very high opinion as to the natural capacity and the brilliant qualities of the third Sir Robert Peel, whom personally I knew very well. I think that on his own topics he was one of the most powerful Parliamentary debaters I have ever heard. Some of his speeches on the cession of Savoy and Nice to France by the Italian Government — I mean the speeches delivered in the House of Commons — appear to me to belong to a very high order of Parliamentary eloquence. There was a passage in one of those speeches which declared that the house of Victor Emmanuel had sprung from the womb of the mountains of Savoy, and that its connection with that birthplace ought to be as eternal as the mountains themselves, which impressed me, at the time, as worthy to come from the lips of a great Parliamentary orator. More than once, too, I had formed the opinion that there was in Sir Robert Peel, if he had only made more careful and studied use of his gifts, a capacity for genuine statesmanship. That he came to nothing in the end, we all know; but at the time when I spoke to John Bright I thought he had done enough to prove at least that the possibility of a great career lay before him. Therefore, when Bright gave it as his opinion, intended to be a disparaging opinion, that Prince Napoleon was only a better educated Sir Robert Peel, the answer merely served to quicken my interest in the man who was then becoming one of the mysteries of the political world.

It was in the early part of 1861 that Prince Napoleon contributed something, of his own spontaneous motion, to help in the solution of the enigma. That was the year when the Emperor removed the restriction which

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prevented both Chambers of the Legislature from freely debating the address, and the press from fully reporting the discussions. There was a remarkable debate in the Senate, ranging over a great variety of domestic and foreign questions, and one most memorable event of the debate was the brilliant, powerful, and exhaustive oration delivered, with splendid energy and rhetorical effect, by Prince Napoleon. 'Mon âne parle et même il parle bien,' declares the astonished Joan, in Voltaire's scandalous poem 'La Pucelle.' Perhaps there was something of a similar wonder mingled with the burst of genuine admiration which went up first from Paris, then from France, and finally from Europe and America, when that magnificent democratic manifesto came to be read. Certainly, I remember no single speech which, during my time, created anything like the same sensation in Europe. For it took the outer world wholly by surprise. It was not a case like that of the sensation created by the florid and fervent eloquence of the then young Spanish orator, Castellar. In this latter case the public were surprised and delighted to find that there was a master of thrilling rhetoric alive and arrayed on the side of democratic freedom, of whose very existence most persons had been previously ignorant. But in the case of Prince Napoleon the surprise was, that a man whom the public had long known, and always set down as a stupid sensualist, should suddenly, and without any previous warning, turn out a great orator, whose eloquence had in it something so fresh, and genuine, and forcible that it recalled the memory of the most glorious days of the French Tribune.

I write of this celebrated oration now only from recollection; and, of course, I did not hear it spoken. I say 'of course,' because the rules of the French Senate,

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unlike those of the Corps Legislatif, forbade the presence of any strangers during the debates. But those who heard it spoke enthusiastically of the force and freedom with which it was delivered; the sudden impulsive fervour of occasional outbursts; and the wonderful readiness with which the speaker, when interrupted, as he was very frequently, passed from one topic to another in order to dispose of the interruption, and replied to each sudden challenge with even prompter repartee. No one could read the speech without admiring the extent and variety of the political knowledge it displayed; the prodigality of illustration it flung over every argument; the thrilling power of some of its rhetorical 'phrases'; the tone of sustained and passionate eloquence which made itself heard all throughout; and, perhaps above all, that flexible, spontaneous readiness of language and resource to which every interruption, every interjected question only acted like a spur to a generous horse, calling forth new and greater and wholly unexpected efforts. In the French Senate, I need perhaps hardly tell my readers, it was the habit to allow considerable license of interruption, and Prince Napoleon's audacious onslaught on the reactionists and the *parti prêtre* called out even an unusual amount of impatient utterance. Those who interrupted took little by their motion. The energetic Prince tossed off his assailants as a bull flings the dogs away on the points of his horns. 'Our principles are not yours,' scornfully exclaimed a Legitimist nobleman -- the late Marquis de la Rochejacquelein, if I remember rightly. 'Your principles are not ours!' vehemently replied the orator. 'No, nor are your antecedents ours. Our pride is that our fathers fell on the battlefield resisting the foreign invaders whom your fathers brought in for the

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subjugation of France!’ The speech was starred with sudden replies equally fervid and telling. Indeed, the whole material of the oration was rich, strong, and genuine. The effect wrought on the public mind was unmistakable: Plon-Plon had startled Europe; he had entered the Senate Chamber on that day with no other reputation, so far as the general public was concerned, than that of a sensualist and a dullard; he came out of it a recognised orator of the highest class. I have been told that he lay back in his carriage and smoked his cigar as he drove home from the Senate, to all appearance the same indolent, sullen, heavy, apathetic personage whom all Paris had previously known and despised.

Not very long after this speech I remember a certain sensation created in the House of Commons one night. Prince Napoleon, about whom the world was talking just then, was seen occupying a seat on that bench which is technically called ‘under the gallery.’ The seats under the gallery are on either side of the entrance doors of the House of Commons itself, are below the Bar of the House, and run to right and left facing the table and the Speaker’s chair. All the benches on either side, except each back bench, are reserved for members only; but each back bench is usually kept for strangers of a certain distinction. They have the advantage of being almost on a level with the benches of the House itself, from which speakers address the Assembly, and are, therefore, convenient for strangers who have friends in the House, as these friends can sit near them and talk with them while the debate is going on. On one of those back benches sat Prince Napoleon; and presently Disraeli rose from his place as Leader of the Opposition and found a seat beside him. I need hardly say that many eyes in the House and in the

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Ladies' Gallery, and of course in the Press Gallery, were turned on these two remarkable figures seated side by side. Disraeli paid the closest attention to the visitor, and seemed to be deeply engaged in explaining all that was going on, and in answering questions. It would not be easy to see two faces more remarkable; no one could even glance at the Prince without thinking of the great Napoleon; and the countenance of Disraeli, with its thick curls still keeping their raven colour, and his markedly Semitic features, was an Asian mystery in itself. Were they not, indeed, two men of mystery — Plon-Plon and Dizzy? — some of us thought. How many years had not Disraeli spent in the House of Commons before the House found out he had any other qualities in him but those of the audacious crank and the self-conceited bore? How many years had Prince Napoleon trifled away before that memorable day when he drove from the Palace of the Luxembourg with the renown of a great democratic orator around him?

I first made the personal acquaintance of Prince Napoleon at the time of the second International Exhibition in London, the organisation of which was due in great measure to the initiative of the late Prince Consort. I met Prince Napoleon at that time, and I had opportunities of meeting him at intervals for some of the years that followed. I was impressed beyond measure by the force of his intellect and by the inexhaustible variety of his information on almost all subjects that belonged to the political life of the past and the present, to literature and art, to the ways and habits of all places which a traveller, who did not go in for being a professional explorer, could have hoped to reach. He had an exquisite taste in all things artistic; he had an intelligent and liberal knowledge of practical

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science; he had a remarkable faculty of organisation; he was a keen humorist and wit; he loved the society of authors and artists and journalists; he mixed with them *en bon camarade* and could talk with each one of them upon his own subject. He was a friend of George Sand, and for a long time he had as his secretary Maurice Sand, her son. He had travelled more than any other prince of his time, more perhaps than any other prince of any time. His Palais Royal home was one of the most elegant and perfectly ordered dwellings belonging to a European Prince. The stranger in Paris who was fortunate enough to obtain admission to it — and, indeed, admission was easy to procure — must have been sadly wanting in taste if he did not admire the treasures of art and vertu which were laid up there; no rules, no conditions, no watchful, dogging lacqueys or sentinels made the visitor uncomfortable. Once admitted, the stranger went where he would, and admired and examined what he pleased. He found there curiosities and relics, medals and statues, bronzes and stones from every land in which history or romance takes any interest; he gazed on the latest artistic successes; he observed autograph collections of inestimable value; he noticed that on the tables, here and there, lay the newest triumphs or sensations of literature — the poem that everyone was just talking of, the play that filled the theatres, George Sand's latest novel, Renan's new volume, Taine's freshest criticism; he was impressed everywhere with the conviction that he was in the house of a man of high culture and active intellect, who kept up with the progress of the world in arts, and letters, and politics. Then there was for a while the famous Pompeian Palace, in one of the avenues of the Champs Elysées, which ranked among the curiosities of Paris,

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but which Prince Napoleon, later on, either chose or was compelled to sell. On the Swiss shore of the Lake of Geneva, one of the most remarkable objects that attracted the eye of the tourist who steamed from Geneva to Lausanne was La Bergerie, another palace of Prince Napoleon. But the owner of these palaces spent little of his time in them. He loved to make long voyages in his yacht; he loved to visit new countries or to revisit old countries which he had travelled through often before; and although he held high administrative offices from time to time, he seemed to have a roving spirit in him which would not allow him to remain long in any fixed position. It began to be said of him that he never took any office but with the intention of speedily resigning it.

My personal opportunities of meeting Prince Napoleon were chiefly in the circles of what I may call the higher artistic Bohemia, and nothing could be more genial or more unassuming than his ways in such a society. He neither gave himself any airs, nor put on the appearance of a man who has made up his mind not to give himself any airs. He was, indeed, the most brilliant Bohemian I have ever met. He could talk about anything, from high politics to Japanese pottery. A famous London jeweller, part of whose business it was to look after the crowns and coronets of most of the sovereign families of Europe, told me once an anecdote of Prince Napoleon which is worth repeating. My jeweller friend had a stall at one of the great Exhibitions — whether in London or Paris I do not remember; on this stall he displayed a large number of real and artificial jewels mixed up together. He prided himself on the admirable skill and the artistic beauty with which the imitations were made up; and he invited favoured visitors to try

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their skill at the delicate task of distinguishing between the real and the sham. Of course no opportunity was given for elaborate and scientific tests, the only object was to see how many among reputed connoisseurs could separate the realities from the imitations. Some very distinguished connoisseurs, he told me, went wrong again and again; only one man was right every time, and that was Prince Napoleon.

I had myself opportunities of knowing that the Prince's judgment was equally safe and correct on subjects of more momentous interest. Long before the Seven Weeks' War of 1866 he had quite made up his mind that the struggle between Prussia and Austria must come to arbitrament on the battlefield, and that Prussia would have a complete victory. Now, I can say that, at the time when the war of 1866 actually broke out, the opinion of the great majority of observers, who thought themselves skilled observers, in England and throughout most parts of the Continent, was that Prussia would go down before her rival. When reading, quite lately, the Memoirs of Henry Reeve, I was much impressed by the fact that among the statesmen with whom he was in communication, not one before 1866 seems to have had the slightest conception of the manner in which Prussia was growing up to be the great Power of Germany. Some eminent men appear to have written quite complacently and in all seriousness about the possibility of Prussia becoming before long a mere vassal of Russia, and even about the possibility of the Czar being some day crowned in Berlin as King of the Prussian State.

Looking back now, it seems to me positively marvellous how anybody could have failed to see that the great homogeneous kingdom of Prussia was destined before

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long to become Germany. Yet it is certain that most of the eminent men with whom Reeve corresponded had no idea of the kind, and I know of my own knowledge that, even at the very outbreak of the war of 1866, many of our leading English statesmen were convinced that Austria was destined to have it all her own way. I know, also, that during all that time Prince Napoleon was filled with a belief that Austria would go down before the rising power of Prussia. There can be no doubt whatever that Prince Napoleon had long been trying to inspire his cousin the Emperor with his own belief that the greatest danger to the Empire was threatening from the Prussian bank of the Rhine.

Then, again, when the great Civil War in America broke out, Louis Napoleon, like most other European statesmen, became filled with the idea that the Southern States were sure to succeed everywhere on the field of battle, and would either enforce their own terms on the Northern Government or would absolutely break up the American Union. Prince Napoleon held from the first the contrary opinion; it was his firm conviction that the Northern arms were certain to prevail in the end. He knew what he was talking about; he had measured the relative strength of populations, of resources, and of purposes, and he foresaw the result. To reassure himself as to his convictions he went out to America; he revisited the Northern and Southern States; he visited the camps on either side; he was received with courtesy and made welcome everywhere; he conversed with Lee and Beauregard in the South, with Grant and Meade in the North; and he returned to Europe with his previous convictions made all the stronger. He did his best to persuade his cousin the Emperor that in relying on the South he was relying on a lost cause; but his efforts

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were all in vain. The Emperor started his ill-omened project of a Mexican Empire. This project came into active operation because of the expedition which the Governments of England and Spain were prevailed upon to enter into with Louis Napoleon, with the avowed object of obtaining reparation for wrongs inflicted by the Mexican Republic on subjects of England, Spain, and France. That was with England and with Spain not only the avowed, but the real object, and the firm intention was that as soon as reparation had been made, the English and Spanish troops should return home. The leaders of the English and Spanish forces soon, however, found good reason to believe that Louis Napoleon had very different and more far-reaching purposes in mind, and that his secret determination was to occupy the capital of Mexico and to convert the Republic into an Empire under the protection and, indeed, under the ownership of Napoleon III.

Everybody remembers the result. The English and Spanish commanders withdrew from all share in the expedition, and brought their forces home. The Spanish commander was my old friend Marshal Prim, whom I have already described in these pages. Louis Napoleon went his way, and set up the Mexican Empire, with his *protégé*, the unfortunate Maximilian of Austria, as the new Emperor. Prince Napoleon did all in his power to dissuade his cousin from this hopeless enterprise. The Emperor was immovable; he was in one of his fits of obstinacy; so convinced was he of the success of his project that he told my friend Sir John Pope Hennessy, during a conversation in the Tuileries, that the Mexican Empire would be recorded in history as the greatest creation of his reign. The Federal Government of America protested against the scheme, but took no

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further step while the Civil War was going on. When the war was over the Federal Government formally announced to Louis Napoleon that he must withdraw the troops of France from Mexican soil, or must take the consequences. The Emperor withdrew his troops and left the unfortunate Maximilian to his fate. With the calamitous break-up of that ill-omened scheme the doom of the Second Empire was foreshadowed. The whole Mexican expedition was undertaken in direct opposition to the persistent and strenuous advice of Prince Napoleon.

Thus, therefore, we see that the Emperor's cousin was a free-trader; that he foresaw the rise of Prussia; that he foresaw the result of the American Civil War; and that he was utterly opposed to the Mexican enterprise. He would be a rash man, indeed, who could pretend to say that the Second Empire might not have lasted until now if the Emperor had taken the advice of his cousin. As everybody knows, Prince Napoleon sometimes made indiscreet political speeches, occasionally kept very bad political company, and withdrew from great public positions just at the time when, with a little patience and forbearance, he might have been able to use the opportunities which they gave him for the lasting benefit of the Empire. But the worst disadvantages which could possibly have arisen from the mistakes he made would have been of the most absolute insignificance when compared with the benefits which might or must have come to the Empire if the good advice he gave had only been followed.

Prince Napoleon seems to have had a remarkable faculty for getting himself talked about. One could hardly travel anywhere without hearing of something remarkable that the wandering Prince had been doing.

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I remember making a short stay once at Havre, and finding the whole place full of some extraordinary feat of swimming which had just been performed in sight of all the beach by the Emperor's cousin. During a visit to Egypt in the winter of 1881-82 I found some of the officials connected with the museums at Cairo filled with enthusiasm about Prince Napoleon. He had been quite lately in Cairo, and it so happened that some new excavations among the pyramids had led to the discovery of important artistic treasures. The officials were surprised and delighted by the thorough knowledge which Prince Napoleon displayed with regard to the value and the meaning of these discoveries, the help he was able to give, the light he was able to throw by his historical and artistic knowledge on every question which was then under the consideration of the authorities at Cairo.

I may perhaps be excused if I tell a somewhat frivolous story which was told to me about Prince Napoleon on the occasion of a visit which I paid to my own native city of Cork in the south of Ireland. Prince Napoleon had put in to the harbour with his yacht a short time before my visit. Now, I am not going to vouch for the truth of the story, and from my own knowledge of the humours of my former fellow-citizens, I think it by no means improbable that it may owe its origin merely to what might be called, in a rendering of the classic words, the genius of the place. When Prince Napoleon put in to the port of Cork, so runs the story, the city was presided over by a chief magistrate who was especially proud of his knowledge of French. Indeed, the legend goes, that this respectable mayor had a way of oppressing his less highly-cultured fellow-townsmen by an anxiety to parade his mastery of the French of Paris. The mayor suggested that a public reception

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should be given to Prince Napoleon, in order to testify the sympathy which true Irishmen ought to have with the people of France and the house of Bonaparte. The proposal was eagerly adopted; and the mayor, as was to be expected, undertook to deliver the address. The ceremony was duly arranged, and Prince Napoleon appeared at the right time. Then his worship the mayor stepped forward and delivered a long and eloquent address, spoken without the help of any manuscript, in what the bystanders assumed to be the native tongue of the illustrious visitor. Prince Napoleon listened with what Hans Breitman calls 'a beautiful solemn smile' on his face, and when the address was over he delivered his reply in the most correct and fluent English. In his opening sentences he thanked the meeting for the generous reception given to him, and the Mayor of Cork for the speech to which he had just listened. He felt sure, he said, that that speech expressed the most kindly and generous sentiments of welcome; but he added his deep regret that, as he never had had any opportunity of studying the noble Irish language, he was not able to follow the words of the worthy chief magistrate. The emotions of the mayor, and of the assembly in general, may, to use the old familiar phrase, be more easily imagined than described. From that day, the story went, the citizens of Cork were no longer oppressed by the mayor's assumption of superiority as a master of the French language.

The very last visit which Prince Napoleon paid to England set people talking about him once again. It was just like his luck, to use the old colloquial phrase. The steamer which was bringing him to the shores of England got into collision with another steamer somewhere in the Channel, and was made all but a wreck in

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a moment. Most of the passengers were soon battling with the waves. Prince Napoleon's valet, as it happened, could not swim; the Prince told him to leap into the sea, and immediately leaped after him, and being a stout swimmer kept himself and his servant safely afloat until help came to their aid; and the Prince, it was stated, declined many offers of help until other passengers less skilled in swimming and in saving life had been properly cared for. It so happened, therefore, that almost the last the English public ever heard of Prince Napoleon, until the end of his life came, was a story which showed him for once, at least, in the unmistakable character of a hero.

The end came about soon after. The whole career of Prince Napoleon was over, and had come to nothing. One of the brightest and, surely, one of the most eccentric lights that had burned in our time went out, and left no trace of effect behind it. Nothing remains of Prince Napoleon but the memory of what ought to have been a splendid success and must be admitted to have been a failure. It would be futile to attempt, now, any sort of explanation, or even conjecture, as to the causes of the failure. I can only record my conviction that all the intellectual qualifications for success were there. I still hold the two opinions I have already expressed, that Prince Napoleon was the most brilliant Bohemian I have ever known, and, much more than that, that I have not met any other man who filled me more completely with a sense of intellectual power.

CHAPTER XXVIII

SOME AMERICANS IN LONDON

I HAVE no intention of making any attempt to describe the American Colony in London, if it can now be said that we have a regular American Colony in London, as there is an American Colony in Paris and during the winter in Rome. My much less ambitious purpose is to say something about certain of the Americans whom I have known in London, and who may now be regarded, or at one time were to be regarded, as among the settled inhabitants of our metropolis. I think the American resident whom I remember for the longest time in London is my old friend the Rev. Moncure D. Conway, who succeeded as minister to the place in Finsbury Chapel once held by the famous Unitarian preacher and orator William Johnson Fox.

The fame of W. J. Fox has much faded in our days. I am afraid it would be only too easy to find many a well-educated young man or young woman just now who would have but a vague account to give of Fox's career as a preacher and a political man. Yet Fox was famous in his day; and he stood in the very front rank of the orators who helped to carry through the policy of Free-trade. I have heard many an old Member of the House of Commons declare that in those days he was more impressed by the eloquence of Fox than by that of Cobden or even by that of Bright. Time, I suppose,

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has settled the question of superiority ; and the world still remembers the eloquence of Cobden and Bright, and has well-nigh forgotten that of Fox. There must have been, however, a wonderful charm in the silvery voice of Fox, and the literary perfection of his style which enthralled the audiences during the days of his popularity, and led so many well-qualified observers to give him the palm of eloquence. I never heard Fox in his great days ; and only remember him as a noble and venerable figure in the House of Commons during his later years, when I heard him deliver two or three short speeches which fell musically on the ear, and were admirable in their literary style, but were too brief to allow one to do more than form a mere estimate of what the orator might have been when he had a great subject to deal with. My friend Moncure Conway had indeed to undertake a most difficult task when he succeeded to the pulpit of W. J. Fox ; but with characteristic good sense and modesty he kept to his own line of work, and made no attempt to put himself into any form of comparison with the eloquence of his predecessor.

Mr. Conway is a man of great intellectual power, and an indomitable faculty for the work of exposition and persuasion. He was born in one of the southern States of America, and, unlike most other Southerners, became imbued from his very childhood with a hatred and horror of the Slavery system. I believe that he made great sacrifices to his convictions, and that he renounced many of the advantages which make life dear to most men, rather than derive any personal benefit from a social institution which he detested. My personal acquaintance with Mr. Conway began in the old days of the 'Morning Star,' while the American Civil War was still going on. He had then settled in London, and, by

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the advice of his friends, he made himself known to the English public by delivering a series of lectures on the Slave question. John Bright took the chair on the occasion of Conway's first lecture; and as Conway was then quite unknown to the general public of London, it was announced by an arrangement made, I believe, without any previous knowledge on the part of the lecturer, that the chairman would deliver a speech at the close of the lecture. The reason for the adoption of this somewhat unusual course will be easily understood. Conway was, as I have said, quite unknown to the general public; Bright was recognised by everybody as the greatest orator on the Liberal side of English political life. If Bright were to speak first, the promoters of the meeting were afraid that many of the audience would go away when the chairman had concluded his speech, and that Conway might have to speak to sadly diminished numbers. But it was perfectly certain that not one of the audience would leave his seat when it was made known beforehand that by remaining in his place he would come in for a speech from John Bright. The lecture was in itself a great success, and amply justified the conviction of Conway's intimate friends that if he only got a chance of addressing a large audience he would make a powerful impression on the minds of those who heard him. So it turned out. The send-off, as an American of our days would call it, accomplished its work; and Conway became a man of mark in all London circles, and, indeed, all political and social circles, throughout the country, where any deep interest was felt in the great issue then at stake on American battle-fields.

I shall never forget the valuable assistance Conway gave us in the editorial rooms of the 'Morning Star'

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during those momentous days. He was a man of advanced views, of keen observation and of sound judgment on many other subjects as well as those which belonged to the cause of the American Union. I remember, for instance, that he clearly saw the great importance of the Schleswig-Holstein question, at a time when not one Englishman in ten thousand cared a straw about the whole controversy. To most of the people with whom I used to come in contact, even among politicians and newspaper writers, the Schleswig-Holstein question only presented itself as an unutterable bore, an unintelligible conundrum which only a few doddering German pedants even professed to understand, and which could have no practical bearing whatever on the statesmanship of Europe. I heard Conway once argue on the subject with great earnestness to a group of friends, who listened with good humour and patience, but could only explain to themselves his seriousness in the matter by the reflection that poor Conway, during some recent wanderings in Germany, must have got his brains bemused by the lecturings of German professors. Conway's theory was that the question had become for Germany a thoroughly national question, and that the German national resolve would have its way, even though that way was to lead across European battle-fields. At that time the English public were charmed by the beauty and the noble qualities of the young Princess of Wales; and the majority of people were quite content to believe that any movement which threatened any of her father's dominions as King of Denmark must *ipso facto* be foredoomed to utter failure and to public reprobation. It was hopeless, people said, to think of understanding the Schleswig-Holstein question. According to a story which was very popular at

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the time, and which many took as a serious contribution to living history, Lord Palmerston had said that there were only two men in England who ever understood the Schleswig-Holstein question—a permanent official, whom he named, at the Foreign Office, and himself. ‘And now,’ Lord Palmerston was averred to have added, ‘that dear old man is dead, and I have forgotten all about the matter.’

When the question began to grow more and more serious there was a strong desire among all true British jingoes—the race existed then, although the name had not been invented—that England should actually intervene by arms in support of the Danish cause. Beyond all question, some of our leading statesmen in office actually encouraged this feeling, and gave their authority to the belief that England was ready to take up arms against Austria and Prussia combined, for the purpose of securing to the King of Denmark the perpetual possession of the disputed provinces. My impressions as to the observation, the knowledge, and the judgment of my friend Conway were much strengthened by the manner in which he proved himself to have mastered this difficult subject, and to have understood to the full the significance of that great Prussian uprising which has been on the whole the most remarkable political phenomenon in the Europe of our time. Since those far-off days I have been in the habit of meeting Mr. Conway from time to time, and our friendship has been steady. There are, of course, many questions on which our opinions differ; but I cannot forget how sound his judgment proved to be on those two great controversies which, each in its own day, agitated English public opinion so deeply, and was in the beginning so little understood. I have not, for many years, been much engaged in any

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political controversy which brought me side by side with Mr. Conway again; but I can never meet him and talk with him without finding my memory go back to those old 'Morning Star' days when he helped us in our task of pleading for the American Union, and of announcing the certain rise of Prussia to the leadership of Germany.

Mr. Conway, like many of his distinguished fellow-countrymen, has been a man of various occupations and studies. He has been a teacher, a lecturer, a divine, a politician, a writer of books, and a newspaper correspondent. During the great war between France and Germany he acted as war correspondent for one of the leading daily papers of New York. He is a lover of art and a connoisseur of painting and sculpture. But I think if I were to describe his character in one phrase I should be inclined to style him a man of Views — and I deliberately put the word with a capital for its opening letter, because I do not think any other way of printing it would quite indicate my meaning. Men and women of Views — again, observe, with a capital letter — are more common, I think, in American society than they are in England. Where there are views of life to be discussed in London, especially where there are new views of life to be discussed, one is safe to find Mr. Conway among the debaters. Yet, I do not mean to say that he is only to be found in assemblies of men and women where ideas as to the big concerns and possibilities of humanity are the theme of solemn debate. Mr. Conway is not always serious, and he is a genial lover of the society of pleasant people, even although they may have no particular views of any novel or original kind to set up for the enlightenment of struggling humanity. Not a very long time has elapsed since I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Conway at a dinner of the Argonauts' Club, at

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which I do not remember that the problems of life were discussed in any momentous way, but at which I know we had what some of Mr. Conway's countrymen would probably call a good time.

Almost of as ancient date, although not quite, as my first acquaintance with Mr. Conway, is my first meeting with Mr. Bret Harte, whom we have all come to include of late among the Americans resident in London. But my acquaintance with Bret Harte did not begin in England; it began in San Francisco. At that time Bret Harte was editing the 'Overland Monthly,' the dear old magazine which had an emblematic picture of the grizzly bear on its cover. I had never heard of the author who has since become so famous, when I read one day his marvellous little poem 'Jim.' As well as I remember, the poem was not even signed with his name, or, if it was, the name did not convey to my mind any manner of idea. But when I read the little poem — that wonderfully dramatic story inspired by all the soul of feeling, full of humour, of fire, of pathos — I felt certain that a new poetic force had arisen in the English language. I met Bret Harte in San Francisco, and I met him afterwards in New York. He was then a very young man — it was years ago, 'I must not say how many, but a great many,' to alter slightly a line in Edgar Allan Poe's poem. When I went back to resume my life in England, I found that the literary world had already discovered Bret Harte, and that he was welcomed into a secure fame. I well remember that my old friend Tom Hood, who is long since dead, wrote to tell me that he was preparing an article on the new American poet, and to ask me whether I knew if Bret Harte was really the young poet's name, or was only what French people never do call a 'nom de plume.'

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Since that time Mr. Bret Harte has established himself in this island, first (as American Consul) in Glasgow, and afterwards in London, where he has now been settled for many years. No one is made more cordially welcome in literary society, and, indeed, in society of any kind which he chooses to favour with his presence. I have met him at all sorts of gatherings — Bohemian and Belgravian — and no one can meet him without being the happier for the meeting. He is one of the few Americans who have no especial gift of speech-making, and he is not a great talker — at all events, he certainly makes no effort to shine in conversation, although it is not possible to converse with him for many minutes without discovering, if one did not know it before, that he is conversing with a man of original mind, of that keenest observation which is keen because it is poetic, and of a humour still as fresh as it was when it first created for European readers the life of the canvas town and of Poker Flat. There is one house in London which, somehow, I especially associate with recollections of Bret Harte. Of course, he is to be met with in numbers of London houses; but at this particular house of which I am now thinking, one had a chance of meeting him in a small congenial company, and of talking with him and of hearing him talk. I am speaking of the house which has for its gifted and charming hostess my friend Mrs. Henniker, the accomplished sister of Lord Crewe, and daughter of Monckton Milnes, the poet, scholar, and politician, afterwards Lord Houghton. Mrs. Henniker is, as everyone knows, an authoress of rare gifts, a writer of delightful stories; like her brother she inherits from her father a rich poetic endowment. She is also one of the hostesses, not very common in our days, who, if she had lived in Paris at a former time,

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would have been famous as the presiding genius of a *salon* where wit and humour, literature and art, science and statesmanship found congenial welcome. Mrs. Henniker's is just the house where one who knows his way about London would naturally expect to meet Bret Harte ; and I have been happy enough to get the chance every now and then of meeting him there. The 'snow-fall of time' has been showing itself very much on Bret Harte's head of late ; but it is a very premature snow-fall ; for he was a handsome young fellow when I first saw him in California, and I know the number of years since that time far too exactly to allow me to believe that Bret Harte has yet grown old.

I am not quite certain whether it is right now to class James McNeill Whistler among Americans in London, for he certainly has forsaken London for Paris for some time, and has been greatly missed here. But he was settled among us for many years ; and who shall say when he may not turn up again as full of life and of indomitable perennial boyishness as he was in the good old days before he had expounded to us the principles of the gentle art of making enemies ? My first acquaintance with Whistler, with 'The Master,' as his admirers love to call him, was made at the house of another American, or, at all events, Irish-American, then living in London, my dear old friend W. J. Hennessy, the painter. Hennessy had then begun to make a name in London art circles by his exquisite sketches of scenery and of life in Normandy, and it was through him that I first had the good fortune of becoming acquainted with Whistler. What a curious, puzzling, bewildering, altogether fascinating combination of the American humorist and the Parisian gamin, I thought Whistler, when our acquaintance began, and how naturally and how com-

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pletely he has kept up the character from that day to this! Whistler was a school of art all to himself. He could not touch a canvas without creating an artistic controversy. According to his admirers, he had never had a rival since the world of art began — ‘why drag in Velasquez?’ — and, indeed, many of his admirers went a little farther even than this, and contended that until he began to paint there had been no painting at all. Even the coolest and most level-headed among us were not able to deny that Whistler could work certain effects with his brush which no other painter seemed able to work, and criticism itself appeared rather afraid to criticise, when dealing with him; for the painter could talk as well as paint, and the critic who threw six hard words at him was sure to have half-a-dozen harder words thrown back in reply.

London went wild over the painter’s ‘Ten o’clock Lecture’; it was given in private as well as in public, and happy indeed was the hostess who could prevail upon Whistler to recite it in her drawing-room. I had the good fortune to hear it at the house of Lady Maidstone, that heroine champion of the lost Stuart cause, against whose convictions no Act of Settlement has power to prevail. Whistler delivered his lecture with admirable effect, with that unstudied dramatic force of style which, while habitually easy and conversational, can now and then break out into sudden oratorical emphasis to give full meaning to some expression. The lecture, of course, was all in Whistler’s own particular vein; nobody but Whistler could have constructed it; and nobody but Whistler could have done full justice to it in delivery. In fact, the lecture was only Whistler’s habitual talk lengthened out into one continuous discourse; it was Whistler having all the talk to

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himself, for a single hour. Everybody who knows Whistler will know his gift of reply and repartee. The steel does not strike fire from the flint more certainly than a good thing said to Whistler brings out a good thing in return. The last time I met Whistler was in Paris; and, as I have said, he seems now to favour Paris at the expense of London. But I daresay he will remember his old friends, and come back to London one day, where most assuredly he will be made welcome; for we all know that while there are many painters and many lecturers, and many masters of bright repartee, there is and can be only one Whistler.

I owe much friendship and many kindnesses to Mr. W. J. Hennessy and to his wife; but there is one kindness of theirs for which I owe to them an especial gratitude. During the earlier days of our friendship Mr. and Mrs. Hennessy had an infant child, a little girl who was baptised under the poetic name of Moya. They did me the honour to ask me to become godfather to the infant, and I most delightedly accepted the office. Time went on, and the Hennessys lived much in France, and I saw but little of them. One day a tall and beautiful young woman came to see me; and, behold, this was my goddaughter Moya, just married to a French nobleman, and turned accordingly into the Vicomtesse Léon de Janzé; and only fancy my feelings of godfatherly pride when I read in several of the Society papers that my goddaughter was the recognised beauty of that season in London Society.

I hardly know whether my friend George Boughton is strictly to be classed among Americans in London. I believe that, as a matter of fact, he was born in England; but he certainly was taken when a child to America, and there he lived, and studied art there and in

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Paris, and then he became settled in London and made his name, and all good Americans were proud of him and vauntingly declared him to be an American painter. Since then he has remained among us ; and whether he is to be classed as an American in England or an Englishman come back from America, matters but little. He must be quite sure by this time that England and America are alike proud of him, and that his English and American friends are equally charmed with his friendship. No house in London is more hospitable than that of Mr. and Mrs. Boughton ; and for those who love celebrities — most of us do, ‘and what for no,’ as Mrs. Meg Dods says in Scott’s novel — it may be safely affirmed that no house in London brings together a greater number of artistic and political celebrities. I have mentioned Mr. Boughton more than once already in this book, and have described him as one of the most conspicuous figures in that Bohemia of Fitzroy Square which has long since become a picturesque and artistic memory.

Henry James is an American who may be said to have thoroughly domesticated himself in London Society, and whose books seem to belong to our literature just as much as those of Robert Louis Stevenson or Thomas Hardy. No man is more popular in London dining-rooms and drawing-rooms than Henry James, and a first night at a theatrical performance would seem incomplete if his familiar figure were not to be seen in the stalls or in one of the boxes. Henry James, too, has an interest in political life, and dines with leading public men in the London clubs which represent the one side of politics and the other. He is a delightful talker, and in his talk can develop views and ideas about every passing subject which can clothe even the trivial topics of the day with

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intellectual grace and meaning. Every now and then some vivid saying or some sparkling epigram comes in, and, indeed, there is only, so far as I know, one thing which Henry James never could do in any conversation — he never could be commonplace.

Another American novelist who seems to have settled among us is John Oliver Hobbs, or, to give her her real name, Mrs. Craigie. Mrs. Craigie captured the reading public of England all in a moment, just as she has more recently captured the theatre-going public of England by her play, 'The Ambassador.' I have heard some people say, in a sort of complaining tone, that Mrs. Craigie's dialogue in 'The Ambassador' is almost too brilliant for them, that the rapid succession of flash after flash bewilders and dazzles them, and that they seem to want a rest after so great a strain upon their comprehensions. It certainly would be very unreasonable to expect that the average British householder should be able to keep up easily with the flights of Mrs. Craigie's bright humour and fancy; but it may be some comfort to such persons, if they have Christian charity in them, to know that the wit and humour cost no effort to Mrs. Craigie. It comes as easily to her to scatter bright fancies and keen epigrams in talk as to any of us ordinary mortals to murmur platitudes. Mrs. Craigie likes to see and study all departments of London life, and she finds herself quite as much at home in the company of politicians as in that of authors and artists. She numbers many a leading politician amongst her friends, and I have often seen her the central figure of an animated group of talkers on the terrace of the House of Commons some soft, sunny evening, when the terrace itself is the ornament of the river and the envy of the unfavoured outsiders who pass up and down in the steamers.

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I must not any longer speak of Mr. George Smalley as an American resident in London, for he is now the New York correspondent of a London daily paper, instead of being, as he was for many years, the London correspondent of a New York daily paper. Still, he has his London connection; and we are inclined to regard him as one who belongs to us yet. My acquaintance with Mr. Smalley goes back to the old 'Morning Star' days, of which I am constantly making mention in these pages; and I remember well that when I first made up my mind to visit the United States, Mr. Smalley was one of the kindly friends who assembled to give me a god-speed on my way, and who helped to make friends for me on the other side of the Atlantic. Time came round, and I had the honour to take part in a farewell dinner given to Mr. Smalley by a friend of his and of mine in the House of Commons, on the occasion of his departure from London to begin his work of correspondence in New York. Mr. Smalley, I think, did not take very kindly to London life in the early days of his settlement among us. The great American Civil War was only just over, and Mr. Smalley, like many other patriotic Americans, was much disposed to resent the manner in which London Society for the most part had thought fit to bestow its sympathies during the struggle. But Mr. Smalley soon made himself very popular in London, and London Society fairly conquered him in the end. The result was but natural; Mr. Smalley's genial manners, wide and varied information, and bright talk made him welcome everywhere, and he soon came to understand that the mistakes which some Englishmen made during the American Civil War came from lack of information merely, and did not really indicate any feeling of deliberate hostility towards the great Amer-

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ican Republic. At all events, it is quite certain that Mr. Smalley became highly popular in English Society, and that he was thoroughly cured of any feeling of dislike towards John Bull and his island. Mr. Smalley was always a man of strong, self-asserting temperament; there was a good deal of what would be called, in the north of England, the 'masterful,' about him. As I heard it once said of an English public man, by one who was anxious to show that he knew something of Latin, 'Whatever he vulted he valde vulted,' and he expressed his opinions, both in print and in social converse, pretty clearly. His opinions by this time had come to be somewhat different from those which he held in former days, and he got into occasional controversy with men who went in for the cause of the masses rather than that of the classes. Mr. Smalley, apparently, was rather fond of controversy, and, to use the familiar expression, 'fancied himself' in it. One writer who apparently put a harsh construction on Mr. Smalley's action as a controversialist took a literary mode of revenge. He was a writer of novels, and he introduced Mr. Smalley into one of his novels in caricature form, and under a thin disguise. The matter was talked of a good deal at the time; but, as it so happened, I did not read the story myself, and have to depend upon the account given by others. Professor Edward Beesley has shown us in one of his most brilliant essays the danger of provoking the anger of a literary man. Mr. Smalley, however, was a stout controversialist, and had, I am sure, less reason to feel alarmed than the victim of Professor Beesley's literary man, and he seems to have satisfactorily survived the caricature.

It would be impossible for me to speak of Americans who live or lived in London without saying something

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of Harold Frederic, whose tragic death created lately a profound sensation here and in his own country. I met Harold Frederic often, and had, of course, a very high admiration for his great intellectual endowments. I made his acquaintance for the first time in the house of my dear old friend, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, who was then living in one of the great piles of flats that belong to the Victoria Street quarter. No one could fail to be impressed and charmed by the freshness, the force, and the thorough originality of Harold Frederic's conversation. At that time he had not written any novels; but anybody might have seen that he was born to be a teller of stories, and of stories that should find their material alike in the heart of humanity and in the hard, prosaic realities of human life. No one could describe the daily existence that goes on in a certain kind of American community with greater fidelity than is shown in Harold Frederic's stories. To one who knows something of the scenes which they picture, they come out with all the realism of a photograph, and yet they have the true artistic form and charm which bring at once their picturesqueness and their reality home to the minds of those English readers who never crossed the ocean. Harold Frederic's novels made their mark in London instantaneously. I remember once talking about one of them at the house of my friend Mrs. Henniker. An English novelist, who was one of the company, expressed the highest admiration for the book, and showed by his comments a genuine appreciation of it; but he offered one criticism on which he invited explanation. The story, he said, had its action in New York State alone, and yet he found people in one part of the book talking in a local dialect very different from that which was used by the personages who figured in other chapters.

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I ventured to suggest that Mrs. Henniker's Yorkshire peasants spoke a very different sort of dialect from that of Thomas Hardy's Wessex folk. 'Yes,' pleaded the critic, 'but then Yorkshire and Dorsetshire are at different ends of the country'; and then it was pointed out to him that he had not taken into consideration the superficial area of the State of New York. Thereupon he gave in, and admitted with good-humoured frankness that he had been thinking of New York State as of something like an English county in extent. If anyone, he hastened to explain, were to have put it to him as a question in geography whether New York State was only about the size of an English county, he should, doubtless, have given a correct answer; but when reading the novel he had not troubled himself with any such calculations, and had only felt surprised that all the people in the State did not talk in the same dialect. The incident reminded me of a question once put to me by a Member of the House of Commons who was about to visit America for the first time, in the year of the Chicago Exhibition. He asked me what kind of a place Chicago was, and I described it to him as well as I could, and mentioned the fact that it was on the borders of Lake Michigan. 'Is it a pretty little lake?' he asked me; and I soon found out that his idea of Lake Michigan was that of another Windermere or Grasmere.

It says, indeed, a great deal for the power and the charm of Harold Frederic's style that he was able to make even his least-travelled English readers feel the full reality of the pictures which he drew from the life and the scenery of his own land. Harold Frederic was the London correspondent of a New York daily paper, and had something to do with the newspaper press of London as well. He took a keen interest in English

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politics, and in Irish politics, too. Some of his closest friends — I am not now speaking of T. P. O'Connor or myself — were men conspicuous in Irish political life, whose views were not always those held by T. P. O'Connor and by me. No differences of opinion, however, on this or that question of political controversy ever interfered with the friendship which we felt for Harold Frederic. His death came as a sudden shock to most of those who had known him. He was in the very prime of life, and he looked full of vital energy and power. To all outward appearance, he was a man who could have borne any stress and strain of hard work and struggle. I have seldom seen anyone who seemed to have more of life in him. The career came to an end before it might be thought to have reached its meridian. Let me say as a personal recollection that it was through Harold Frederic I first came to meet in living presence one whose books I had long known and cordially admired — Mr. George Gissing — whose novels, I think, have not yet obtained all the popularity which they deserve, although for those who have read them nothing is wanting to their praise.

Let me pass from American residents of the past and present to tell a few anecdotes concerning American visitors to London. American ladies, I am very glad to say, generally take a deep interest in Westminster Palace and the two Houses of Parliament and the Terrace. Any visitor who happens to be on the Terrace during the later part of the session may be sure that there are bright American women among the crowds who gather around the little tables. American ladies are generally very curious about our odd ways and rules and regulations in the House of Commons. It seems to them, not unnaturally, that our inhospitable system is framed with

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the main object of keeping visitors out of the place; whereas, in the Capitol at Washington, the regulations seem to have been devised with the kindly purpose of enabling strangers to come in. One American lady, of whom I had charge a few sessions ago, was greatly amused and puzzled by what seemed to her the perplexing and cross-grained nature of some of our rules. I had obtained for her a place in the Ladies' Gallery, and when the hour came at which she wished to leave, I escorted her into the Lobby of the House itself, and thence down the stairs which conduct to what is known as the Members' entrance. As we were midway down the stairs, I thought it a convenient moment to illustrate to her the peculiarities of some of our existing rules. 'You must understand,' I said, 'that a lady can only come down or go up these steps in the company of a Member of the House of Commons. If I were suddenly to be called away from your side, and were to leave you standing here and go back into the House, do you know what your position would be?' She acknowledged that she had no particular idea of any peril that might threaten her. 'Then listen,' I went on to explain, 'you would not be allowed to return back alone into the Lobby of the House which we have just quitted, and, on the other hand, you would not be allowed to go down these stairs and make your way into the open air, and so find your way home. Think, therefore, of what your position would be; you could neither escape by the one way nor by the other unless some Member of the House should happen to pass up or down these stairs who was willing to take charge of you and give you the benefit of his escort.' Her eyes brightened with amusement at the idea of this condition of possible *impasse*; but she proved herself equal to the occasion. With a delight-

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fully mock heroic air, she said, 'When next I come to the House of Commons I shall wrap the American flag round my breast and see who will dare to molest the Stars and Stripes!'

On another occasion I had the pleasure of showing another American lady over such parts of the House of Commons as are, or were, open to the visits of strangers. At that time — I am speaking now of some few years ago — ladies were allowed to enter the library of the House when accompanied by a Member. The rule, however, was very strict that no visitor must sit down in the library. I was showing my American friend through the different rooms of the library, and I happened to mention to her that no stranger was allowed to sit down there even for a moment. 'Is it against your rules,' she said, 'for even a lady to sit down in the sacred chamber?' 'Yes,' I answered, 'it is strictly against the rules.' Then she said, with a charmingly rebellious look in her face, 'Just see how I break that inhospitable rule.' Suiting the action to the words, she drew a chair and deliberately seated herself in it. I hurried her away before any of the attendant officials had time to see the regulations of the House of Commons thus defied by a bewitching intruder from the great Republic. What might have happened had this defiant breach of order been observed by official eyes I do not venture to imagine — perhaps the clock tower, perhaps the subterranean chambers, perhaps another American war — who shall say? Happily I was able to induce my rebellious companion to quit the building in time, and without raising any international question.

Another incident occurred which put an American lady to some inconvenience for which I was myself alone responsible. The lady in question was tall and of

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stately presence, and had been put into my charge by another Member of the House who had to leave Westminster Palace for the evening. Now, as all ladies who have visited the House of Commons will know, there is a kind of step or perch just outside one of the two doors of brass and glass which admit to the debating chamber itself. This particular perch, which is at the left of the two doors as you enter the chamber, is reserved as a place where a lady, or two ladies, may stand, and from which they can look through the great glass panes into the House itself. No man is allowed to stand upon this perch, even though he be a Member of the House, and, on the other hand, the ladies who visit the place are not allowed to stand upon the floor and thus look through the glass door and study the Parliamentary benches; they must either mount upon the perch or they may not stand near the door at all. I had shown the lady who was given into my charge over the library and some of the corridors, and then I brought her to have a look at the debating chamber itself. I showed her the perch reserved for the use of herself and her sisterhood, and she mounted up and soon became absorbed in a study of the chamber. In the meanwhile a Member of the House came out and drew my attention to something going on within, and I went with him back into the House, and was immediately engaged in a consultation about some question of importance which was expected to arise. I confess to my shame and sorrow that for the time I entirely forgot all about the poor lady who was standing on the perch outside the door.

Some of my friends and I went into consultation in one of the lobbies. The subject then actually before the House was one of exceeding dulness, and the debating chamber gradually became almost empty. We,

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however, were concerting some plan of action to be taken at a later hour in the night, if an opportunity should arise to call for our interposition. We passed out of the Lobby through the door behind the Speaker's chair, and had a short conference with one of the members of the Government who was then in his private room. The dinner time was approaching, and some of us went and dined. I did not hurry back from dinner, there were hours yet of possible debate; but at last I lounged slowly back into the House, and just as I was about to push open the right door of the debating chamber I heard a plaintive voice that seemed to be somewhere in the air above my head; and the plaintive voice uttered the words: 'Mr. McCarthy, may I not come down now?' Then the whole terrible truth flashed upon me: I had forgotten all about the poor lady; she had been left standing there on that perch all the time. As she explained to me, she had heard so much about the rigorous rules of the House of Commons that she did not dare to get down unprotected by the presence of a Member, for she did not know to what darksome dungeon she might not have been conveyed for so flagrant a breach of our Parliamentary law. As I have said, the night was a very dull one; there was nothing going on in the chamber to attract any other ladies to its door, and my poor friend's position was left wholly unnoticed. If any other lady had come, she would have come escorted by a Member, and an explanation would then have been easy. I could have been sent for, and brought back to the post I had so shamefully deserted. But, as things were, no visitor came; and the attention of the door-keepers was not directed to the position of the perplexed American lady; and there she stood, silent, uncomplaining, but suffering sadly from fatigue of limb and the

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utter absence of any scene or movement in the chamber which could possibly interest any human being. I made all the apologies I could ; but how can one apologise to a lady for having forgotten her very existence ? This American lady was far more kindly and gracious to me than I deserved ; and if her eyes should ever happen to rest upon this page, I hope she will accept this public declaration of my repentance and my remorse.

My next and last anecdote on the subject of visitors to the House of Commons I tell partly, of course, for the instruction or amusement of the public ; but partly also for the especial benefit of my friend Mr. George W. E. Russell. An American friend and his wife came to see me in London some years ago. It was arranged that my daughter and I should accompany them to the House of Commons, and that we should have a little dinner there. In the course of conversation on our way to the House and through the House, I discovered that my American friends had some odd notions with regard to the manners of the British aristocracy ; it seemed to be a fixed article of faith in their minds that everyone in England who had any direct connection with a family in the peerage was wont to bear himself with haughty demeanour towards his humbler fellow-subjects, and was especially inclined to vaunt his superiority over any native of the great American Republic, where merit is marked by no hereditary title. My daughter and I endeavoured to controvert this opinion without making too much of it, and we hoped that even in the intercourse of a short visit our friends might acquire other views as to the ways of the British aristocrat. We had a pleasant little dinner, and one or two Members of the House of Commons made part of our company ; Mr. George Russell was one of these guests. Everything

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went on delightfully until we were about to break up after dinner, and then our American friends told me that they had a letter of introduction to a Member of the House who then actually held a position in Her Majesty's administration. I said I had not seen him in the House that night; but Mr. Russell came to the rescue and explained that the man we were speaking of was actually at that time working in an office which he had within the precincts of the House itself.

I did not happen to know where the office was; and Russell benignly said, 'It's the easiest place to find; go into the outer lobby and you will see the entrance to it just behind my uncle's statue.' Everyone who has been in the outer lobby knows the statue of the late Earl Russell, the Lord John of historic memory. Mr. Russell shortly after left us, having to go back into the House; and my daughter and I went to conduct our visitors to the friend whom they desired to see. But, on the way, they both broke out, as if with one thought and with one voice, 'There! did we not tell you? were we not right? "behind my uncle's statue"! Yes, to be sure, "behind my uncle's statue"! Just to show us untitled Americans what poor things we are — we, who have no noblemen uncles with statues to consecrate their nobility.' Mr. Russell has never, I am sure, heard this story before; but if he should happen to read it in these pages, I hope it may prove a lesson to him to abate his fierce aristocratic pride, and to be sure that on no future occasion does he ever, from no matter what good-natured purpose, endeavour to help us, the lowly born, upon our humble way, by any allusion to 'my uncle's statue.'

CHAPTER XXIX

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

I MET Charles Stewart Parnell for the first time shortly after he had entered the House of Commons in 1876. My acquaintance with him grew closer and closer, and soon ripened into companionship and friendship. For a great many years I saw him probably more often than any other of his political comrades could have done. I knew him intimately during all those long years, and he came to see me at my house in London only three weeks before his death. I shall not invite my readers to enter into any consideration of political questions; I am only anxious to draw, to the best of my ability, a portrait of Parnell as he appeared to me and as I knew him. I may, perhaps, say at once that, when I entered Parliament, Parnell was not yet leader of the Irish party, and I did not enter the House of Commons as a political partisan of his as opposed to Isaac Butt. It was not he who urged me to seek for election to the House of Commons; and when I received an invitation from the County of Longford, I positively declined to pledge myself to his Parliamentary policy. I was elected to the House of Commons in absolute independence, without any promise to him and without any authoritative help from him. It was not until I had been for some time in the House that I became

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converted to his policy, and openly declared myself his follower.

When I first knew Parnell he was living in lodgings in Keppel Street, Russell Square. I have read lately that Parnell at the time occupied a 'squalid lodging.' Now, Keppel Street, Russell Square, is certainly not in a fashionable quarter of London; but it is a street of fine old-fashioned houses, with spacious and handsome apartments, which have nothing of squalor about them that ever I could see. I lived at the time and for some years after in Gower Street, out of which Keppel Street runs, and the whole region indeed is that which I have already described in this book as the Bohemia of Fitzroy Square. The neighbourhood suited Parnell, as it suited me, because the houses were all large and roomy and comparatively cheap, and because it was near to the City and the Strand and the House of Commons. Anyhow, Parnell and I were near neighbours for a considerable time; and he used to come often from his 'squalid lodging' in Keppel Street to visit me in my 'squalid' Gower Street home. We had some pleasant dinner-parties in that home, now and then; and I remember that it was there Parnell first made the personal acquaintance of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, of Mr. Leonard Courtney, and of Charles Russell, as he was then, at present Lord Russell of Killowen. Parnell used to come to see me often quite informally in the early afternoons, and the casual visits always had to be early because we both had to attend the sittings of the House of Commons, he as a Member of the House, and I as a writer of leading articles for the 'Daily News.' I am speaking of the days before I myself found a place on the green benches of the House. Parnell soon became a great favourite with all the members of my family,

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and his presence was always welcome. He was then a handsome man, still quite young, with a tall and stately figure, and a singularly sweet and winning smile. He had the easy manners of a perfect gentleman. Two members of my family were very young persons when we first came to know Parnell, and he delighted them by his sympathetic ways and by the genial ease with which he made himself interested in their occupations. I have never met in my life a better-bred man than Parnell.

I have lately read a great deal about his chilling manners, about his haughty superciliousness, about his positive rudeness to strangers, and, indeed, to all persons whom he considered in any way beneath himself, so far as social position was concerned. I can only say that, if the man thus described was Parnell, then I never knew Parnell at all, never could even have seen him. For the Parnell with whom I was in closest intimacy for some fifteen years bore not the slightest resemblance to that other Parnell, but was indeed in every way curiously unlike him. I have seen him in all sorts of companionships, tried by all manner of provocations, beset by bores, perplexed by worries, and I never saw in his manner anything that did not belong to the character of a thorough gentleman. I have read over and over again about some lowly-born member of Parnell's party having so far forgotten his humble station as to address his leader by the name of 'Parnell,' and being instantly rebuked by frowning brow and chilling tone, and the words 'Mr. Parnell, if you please.' Now, of course, it is not possible for me to say that no such incident ever occurred, because I could not profess to have been present at every interchange of words between Parnell and any other member, or all the members of his party. I can only say that the whole story seems to me to tell

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of something utterly unlike any way or characteristic of Parnell's which ever came under my observation.

It must be borne in mind, too, that the House of Commons is in many of its ways a good deal like a great public school, and that even on very slight acquaintance men are apt to address each other by their surnames without the use of any formal prefix. Parnell never had any of, what I may call, the rollicking gaiety which belongs to so many Irishmen. He came, as everybody knows, from an old English family which had settled in Ireland, and his mother was an American of old colonial descent. It may be, therefore, that to some of his followers his manners seemed comparatively distant and cold; but I certainly never saw anything in him which suggested an absence of that recognition of the principle of comradeship which a leader of men, who desires to be successful, would have to invent if it had not already existed. Nor was there anything ungenial or uncompanionable about Parnell's habits. He was fond of the society of his intimate friends, and he very much enjoyed giving pleasant little dinners in the House of Commons, or in some of the best restaurants, to those whose companionship he found congenial. He was always a charming host; and, although nobody could have had less personal interest in eating and drinking, viewed as branches of the fine arts, no one could have taken greater pains to make sure that his guests had everything to suit their taste and their comfort. When I have read from time to time story after story about his grim austerity, his indomitable aloofness, his stern refusal to take part in any social gathering, I have thought of those many genial evenings spent with him, and have wondered if this is the sort of way in which history is usually written.

Parnell was certainly by nature and habit a very abstemious man. I do not know even whether that phrase quite conveys the idea which I desire to impart to my readers. Perhaps I ought rather to say that he took little or no interest in food or drink, except as a necessary means of satisfying hunger and thirst. I remember in my early days having had the example of the good little boy Harry in 'Sandford and Merton' held up for my imitation, Harry who only ate when he was hungry and drank when he was dry. Now, Parnell had certainly never modelled himself on the example of little Harry; but, nevertheless, his way was to eat only when he was hungry and to drink only when he was dry. He had, naturally, a good healthy appetite, especially when he could get into the open air; but I never saw a man who had a less keen interest in what old-fashioned writers used to call the pleasures of the table. I have often seen his champagne glass standing beside him at dinner untasted, just because, not happening to be thirsty, he had forgotten all about it. I have known him in the House of Commons to be quite uncertain sometimes as to whether he had or had not eaten his dinner that day. All the time there was nothing of the ascetic about him, and he enjoyed a pleasant dinner when it was shared in by a pleasant company. He was very attentive to the graceful little courtesies of life; and when he went on a shooting expedition over his Wicklow estate he never failed to send to some of his friends in London, myself among the number, some share of the spoil of his gun.

I have heard some of the kindest stories told about his dealings with his Wicklow tenants. One I venture to repeat, because it was told me by an English lady who could personally vouch for its truth, and who is the

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daughter of a house famous in the history of English nobility. She paid some visits to Ireland, and took a deep interest in the cottier tenants. Among other places, she visited the Wicklow estate of Parnell, and was charmed to find the kindly relations which existed between the landlord and the tenants. She went into one house which was newly built and had every appearance of comfort, enough even to satisfy the eyes of an English visitor who was accustomed to look at the homes of English tenantry. The woman who owned the house told my friend that it had been built for her by 'Masther Charles' because the house she formerly occupied was quite uncomfortable, and he had noticed the fact, and said that he must provide her with a better home. My friend noticed during her stay in this cottage that the chimney of one of the rooms sent its smoke downward instead of upward, and she made some remark on the subject. The woman of the house said that was the only trouble in the new building. 'But why don't you speak to Mr. Parnell about it?' was the natural question. 'Sure, my lady,' was the reply, 'I've been trying to keep it a secret, for Masther Charles would be so disappointed if he found that everything had n't turned out as well as he wanted it to be.' There was a charming simplicity about the answer, which touched the heart of my friend, who rightly thought that it spoke as well for the nature of the landlord as it did for that of the tenant.

I have no doubt that Parnell was, in a certain sense, an exacting man with those who had to follow him in his course of political action. When he had some purpose in view he was absolutely unsparing of his own trouble, and he expected his comrades to be as unsparing of theirs. Sometimes, we may be sure, he expected

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rather too much. Until the very latest years of his life he was a man of remarkable physical strength, a great athlete, a daring rider, and an untiring walker, the very embodiment of masculine energy and perseverance. He cared nothing about fatigue, he could bear with hunger and thirst to an extent far beyond the capacity of an ordinary man. It was only natural, therefore, that he should sometimes be a little unreasonable in expecting from others the same prolonged exercise of self-denial which he himself was able to call into action. I have often seen, however, that a few timely words of remonstrance were enough to induce him to make ample allowance for the want of physical endurance of men less gifted with strength than himself. His was, indeed, physical strength, not constitutional strength; for while he had immense power of bone and sinew and muscle, he was constitutionally of a somewhat delicate mould. For all his habitual calmness he had a temper which was liable to sudden bursts of excitement, which he was not always able to keep under strict control. It is told of George Washington that on one occasion, and one only, he actually swore at an officer who was not quick enough in his forward movement to fight the enemy. I remember Parnell, on one occasion, losing his temper to something of a like extent, when one of his followers betrayed an unwillingness to obey orders and keep a long debate going. It was during the obstruction days, and Parnell thought it of the highest importance that the debate should be kept up during the whole of the night. Most of his companions who were actually in the House had already spoken, and were quite exhausted; but we were expecting fresh reinforcements, and Parnell was determined that the debate should be kept going until their arrival. He asked one of his followers,

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habitually a long-winded man, who enjoyed hearing himself talk, to keep up the debate until the expected auxiliaries should begin to arrive. The Member thus enjoined hesitated and boggled, complained that he had not heard any of the more recent speakers on the other side, and, in fact, showed a wholly unexpected reluctance to fill up the gap. Then Parnell's temper did actually give way, and in a low tone he committed an offence, not unlike that perpetrated by Washington, and ended by asking the hesitating Member what he thought he was there for if he was unwilling to talk against time.

As a rule, however, nothing could be more cordial and friendly than Parnell's relations with the members of his Party. Some of them — I name no names — were in the habit of chaffing him to their heart's content about his ways and his peculiarities. One of them, I recollect, happened to notice that Parnell came down to the House with a new hat on, and asked him gravely whether he had assumed the new hat for the purpose of personal disguise — in allusion to the many stories which then used to appear in certain newspapers about Parnell's supposed efforts to hide himself from the recognition of his enemies. It was a source of peculiar wonder to me how Parnell was able to compel himself to pay anything like close attention to his Parliamentary work, for he certainly found no natural joy in it. He hated speech-making of all kinds, and he took no delight whatever in the life of the House of Commons. I can positively affirm that I myself take no delight whatever in the making of speeches, and never want to make a speech if I can avoid it; but then I have always felt strongly attracted to the life of the House of Commons, enjoyed its debates and all its ways, rough and smooth,

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and especially liked the kind of comrade feeling that prevails amongst Members, no matter how they may be divided by principles and parties. But I could never discover that Parnell found the least pleasure in Parliamentary debate or in the life of the House of Commons. He often told me frankly that he hated having to make a speech, and that his one absorbing desire when he got upon his feet was to say all that he wanted to say as quickly and as clearly as possible, and then to resume his seat at once. I am quite convinced that he thought himself a very bad speaker. He told me again and again that he supposed one reason why he disliked speech-making so much was because it was beyond his power to make a good speech. 'I suppose,' he added once, 'that every man hates doing a thing when he knows he does it badly.' I told him that the converse would not always hold, for I knew that John Bright hated having to make a speech, and yet it could hardly be assumed that Bright thought he spoke badly. 'No,' Parnell admitted, 'but I daresay if Bright thought he spoke badly he would like speech-making even less than he does now.'

In truth, Parnell was, for the purposes he had in view, a very successful speaker. He had that kind of eloquence which consists in saying all one wants to say with the greatest possible directness of effect and the least possible waste of words. Gladstone once told me that he had never heard any Parliamentary speaker, even Lord Palmerston, who had so perfectly, as Parnell had, the art of saying all that he wanted to say without the use of a single superfluous sentence. Parnell, of course, had no gift of imagination; his speeches had no ornament whatever to make them attractive; he could not set them off by any happy illustrations drawn from

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history or from literature; all the great poets and prose writers had lived in vain, so far as he was concerned. I do not think I have ever known another man of the educated classes who knew so little of literature as Parnell. Except for works which dealt with applied science and for Parliamentary reports, I do not know that Parnell ever read a book in his life. About the poet's art and the literature of fiction he knew absolutely nothing; all that side of life was but a blank to him. Twice only, so far as I know, did he indulge in poetic citation, and in both cases he went wrong. In the first instance he wanted to quote Thomas Moore's somewhat hackneyed description of Ireland as 'First flower of the earth and first gem of the sea'; and he converted it into 'First flower of the earth and first jewel of the ocean.' In the second instance he had another scrap of Moore floating vaguely in his memory, but he thus gave it out, 'As Lord Byron has said, "On our side is virtue and Erin, on theirs is the Saxon and guilt."' I once told him that I was about to realise one of the great dreams of my life by spending some time in Athens. He asked me, with a kindly show of interest, whether Athens was considered a pleasant place in which to pass a holiday. But little as he knew or cared about book reading, Parnell wrote a clear, concise, and admirable English style, and was, indeed, a great stickler about accuracy and precision of written style. An error in spelling was as offensive to him as the sight of a black beetle is to many a man. I once handed him a letter which I had received from a constituent of mine, asking me to call Parnell's attention to some improvement which he thought might be made in a Bill, then before the House, dealing with the subject of agricultural occupation in Ireland. Unluckily, the

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poor man who wrote the letter had spelt agricultural with two g's. Parnell looked at the letter, smiled sadly, and handed it back to me. 'Do forgive me,' he said, 'and tell me all about it. I could n't read through a man's letter who spells agricultural with two g's.' It was, indeed, a curious stroke of fate which led the unhappy author of the Parnell forgeries to ornament his letters with flagrant examples of bad spelling.

Parnell sometimes showed that he had what the Elizabethan writers would call 'a pretty wit.' I remember sitting with him one night in the lower smoking-room of the House of Commons when one of his followers came down from the House in a considerable state of excitement. 'Look here, Parnell,' he exclaimed, 'there is a man upstairs in the House'—he mentioned the man's name—'who is making an unfair attack on you.' 'Indeed,' said Parnell, with his bland, quiet smile, 'and what does he say against me?' 'Well,' replied the other, 'he is saying that, until the Dublin Election of 1874, people never heard of you.' 'Never mind,' said Parnell, dismissing the subject with a placid gesture, 'people have heard of me since.' So, as the newspaper reports would say, the matter dropped. Once we were talking of certain distinguished Members of the House, and the name of a man came under consideration who was undoubtedly a very eloquent speaker, but whose style was somewhat florid and redundant. 'I think,' Parnell observed, 'that man's defect is that he likes to use ten words where one word would be rather more than enough.' On another occasion an impassioned follower of Parnell was contending, while some of us sat together in the smoking-room, that we did not use the strength of our lungs nearly as much as certain Tory Members did. 'Many of our inveterate

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adversaries,' he declared, 'would be deterred from their constant attacks on us if when any one of them arose he was greeted by sustained shouts of defiance from the ranks of the Irish National Party.' 'I see,' Parnell observed, with the gracious smile which always heralded one of his sarcastic touches, 'quite the tactics of the Chinese Army in fact.' We heard no more of that plan of Parliamentary campaign. Not long after Parnell had been formally elected leader of the Irish National Party, my daughter, who was then but a young girl, had hung up in our dining-room a photograph published by some Irish photographer, which contained a small portrait of Parnell in the centre, and the portraits of several of the more conspicuous Irish Nationalist Members surrounding it. She had written on the margin of the engraving the line from Matthew Arnold's poem, 'The leader is fairest, but all are divine.' Parnell happened to be in our house soon after the setting up of this group of portraits, and he looked at it and read the line which served as its motto. 'It is not for me to complain,' he said to her, 'but do you think that the word "divine" describes quite correctly the appearance of our friend,' —and he mentioned the name of an Irish Member whose warmest admirer could not claim for him the divine charm of personal beauty.

I may say that Parnell was always a great favourite with young people of both sexes. He had the faculty of entering sympathetically into all their ideas and pursuits, and of giving to them in clear, intelligible words some ideas or suggestions which were sure to take a hold upon their young intelligences. Where boys were concerned this, of course, was not very surprising, for Parnell was a master of every form of athleticism, and it would be impossible to find a healthy boy fond of out-

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door exercises to whom he could not give some advice which would help him in his sports. But he had the same sympathetic faculty when he came to talk with little girls. In those days of which I am now speaking, my daughter had just begun to study art at the Slade School, University College, London. Parnell knew little or nothing of art himself, but he felt an interest in the subject, and one of his sisters had made drawing and painting a study. Whenever he came to our house he always set himself to a talk with my daughter about her studies and the progress she was making with them, and he told her of this, that, and the other task which his sister had been working at, and, for the time, a casual observer might have fancied that his chief interest in life consisted in watching the training of girls in the schools of art. I have heard and read many stories about his total indifference to the ordinary rules of social courtesy, his neglect to answer invitations, his failure to appear at dinner-parties which he had promised to attend, and various other delinquencies of the same nature. Of course, I cannot possibly say that some of these stories may not have been true—it would be futile for me to attempt to prove a negative in that way; I only know that nothing of the kind ever came within my range of experience, and that I do not know of any friend who ever sent a kindly social invitation to Parnell without receiving a courteous reply to it. He went very little into the social life of London, partly because he had a strong impression that English people in general disliked him, and that even where his host and hostess were thoroughly friendly, some of their guests might be reluctant to meet him. ‘The truth is,’ he said to me more than once, ‘I am nervous about being disliked; I hate to be hated.’

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That he was a very nervous man was clear to everybody who knew him. Nervousness, I should say, was the only sensation approaching to fear which he ever knew in his life. He told me once, quite gravely and seriously, that he always avoided, as far as possible, the putting down of questions on the notice paper of the House of Commons — questions, as everyone will understand, to be addressed to Ministers in charge of Departments about some supposed grievance, or other such subject. He said that he found it almost intolerable to have to wait until his turn came as marked by a number on the notice paper, to be called upon by the Speaker and invited to put his question. He told me he did not feel anything about starting up and putting, on the spur of the moment, some question which had just occurred to his mind; but it gave him a nervous horror to have to sit, perhaps for half an hour, waiting in silence his turn to be called to put a question printed on the notice paper. Of fear, in the ordinary sense of the word, Parnell, I am convinced, had as little as he had of self-conceit. But his nervous system was intensely acute, and I do not believe there was the least exaggeration in the account which he gave me of his feelings during the period of suspense while waiting for his turn to put some question to the head of a Department. I feel quite sure, therefore, that one reason why he kept so much out of general society in London was just that nervous objection to going into any company where he might happen to meet some who would rather not have met him. After the conversion of Mr. Gladstone to Home Rule, Parnell was lionised immensely in the social life of the Liberal Party, and would have been welcomed with delight at every Liberal house. Still, even then, it was not easy to induce him

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to accept invitations, even from those who had become good and sincere friends of his cause. Some of the old nervous feeling still lingered in his mind, and I am sure that on the whole he would much rather have been let alone than favoured with the kindest invitations. I am well convinced that this deep-rooted, constitutional nervousness of Parnell's may be regarded as the explanation of many an action which seemed eccentric, or which, criticised from a hostile point of view, might be regarded as discourteous. Among those whom Parnell really knew I can only say that I am convinced that there never was anything in his conduct or his manner which showed him in any other character than that for which nature and training had fitted him — the character of a gentleman.

I have been speaking of social life for the most part. Where political work was concerned, Parnell had, of course, to disappoint many claimants on his time, and sometimes was quite unable to answer all the invitations he received from the organisers of public meetings all over Great Britain and Ireland. From every city, town, parish, and village in Ireland applications came daily pouring in upon Parnell pressing him to attend their local meetings, and all the time he was receiving constant invitations from Irish organisations in all parts of England and Scotland. Parnell's private means were greatly reduced from the positive incapacity to attend to the management of his estates which was caused by his political engagements. He was only able to keep a single secretary. A distinguished English Member of the House of Commons once told me of a conversation which he had with a member of the Episcopal Bench who complained of the amount of work imposed upon him by his duties in his diocese. 'I have to keep a

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secretary constantly employed,' the dissatisfied bishop observed. My friend's comment on the observation was that the work could not be very hard which could be fully accomplished by a single secretary, for, as he said to me, 'I keep three secretaries constantly going, and I never can get abreast of my work.' Parnell had only one secretary, and had work enough imposed on him to keep half a dozen secretaries in constant employment. It is no wonder, then, if he found it physically impossible to answer, within any reasonable time, half the pressing applications which poured in upon him every day. Then, he was frequently summoned away to undertake work which some of his friends thought might be productive of good results to the National cause of Ireland, but which were quite outside the field of our ordinary political operations. Let me give one example of the sort of extra duty which was thus occasionally imposed upon him. During the earlier part of his Parliamentary struggle some of his friends thought that much good effect might be wrought on the public opinion of the world if he were to obtain some sympathetic declarations from eminent men in France in recognition of the Irish claim for national self-government. Parnell, after some consideration, adopted the suggestion, and accompanied by his friend and colleague, James O'Kelly, who had served as a volunteer with the French Army in the war of 1870, he went over to Paris in order to obtain some public expressions of sympathy with the Irish cause. I quote a letter which I received from him during his visit to Paris, a letter which, while its publication now can cause no controversy, will illustrate effectively enough the varied kind of work Parnell had often to undertake.

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‘HOTEL BRIGHTON, 218 RUE DE RIVOLI, PARIS,
February, 24, 1881.

‘MY DEAR MCCARTHY, — I find on my arrival here that it will take me at least a week to finish the work which I began during my last visit to Paris. I trust, however, that everything will be completed in time to enable me to return for the first reading of the Land Bill. Meanwhile, I hope the Party under your guidance will be able to continue their gallant resistance to coercion to the very end, and will excuse my absence, knowing that the results daily being obtained here are of the most important and encouraging character.

‘Yours very truly,

‘CHARLES S. PARNELL.

‘P. S. — I propose calling on the Archbishop of Paris to-morrow, and have also arranged for an introduction to Marshal MacMahon, who takes the greatest interest in the Irish question. Victor Hugo’s manifesto will appear before the end of the week.’

It is not very surprising if a man thus incessantly engaged in such various kinds of work, and with whom all-night sittings in the House of Commons made but an ordinary occupation, should have had to leave a great many letters lying unanswered for a length of time which sometimes tried the patience of the writers. Parnell, too, had never been trained to the habits of a man of business. It was often surprising to me how one whose ordinary pursuits in life were only those of a country gentleman especially given to hunting, shooting, field sports, and athletics of all kinds, could have contrived to put even as much system as he did into the work which devolved upon him as leader of the Irish Party, controller of its political actions, and manager of

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all its financial affairs. There was nothing of the sentimentalist about Parnell, so far as the Irish National cause was concerned. He never indulged in any of the kind of eloquence which Michael Davitt has humorously described as 'sun-burstery.' His mind did not deal in abstractions; he was not what would have been called a man of ideas. He saw certain distinct and concrete grievances in the Irish system of land tenure, and in the management of Irish affairs generally; and he had come to the conclusion that those grievances could only be remedied by the administration of an Irish Parliament sitting in Dublin. He was familiar with the working of American and Canadian systems; and his desire was that Ireland should be to the Empire what an American State is to the Union, or a Canadian Province is to the Dominion of Canada.

Yet, it is a curious fact, that something like a personal, and even a sentimental, consideration first turned his attention to the whole Irish question, which afterwards absorbed his life. Once, while we were travelling together in Ireland, he gave me an account of the manner in which he had found himself brought into hostility with the existing system of rule in that country. Up to the time of the Fenian rising in 1867, he told me he had never given any attention to the subject. He was then at Cambridge, and his mother was living in his ancestral home at Avondale in the County of Wicklow. His mother, an American, was suspected by the local authorities of being in some sort of sympathy with the Fenian movement, and was supposed to have sheltered fugitive Fenians in her house. A search was ordered, and the police went through Avondale in the hope of finding some hidden Fenian. Even his mother's bedroom was carefully and ostentatiously searched with the

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object of finding, if possible, some concealed offenders against the law. Parnell's eyes lit up with fire as he told me that if he had been there he would have shot the first man who endeavoured to force his way into Mrs. Parnell's room. That search at Avondale, he assured me, turned his attention to the whole subject of Ireland's grievances; and from that time his determination grew and grew to give himself up to the Irish National cause. He became convinced that the House of Commons was the only battlefield on which the question could be fought out with any real hope of advantage to Ireland. The more he brooded over the subject the stronger his conviction became, and his idea was that, by using the House of Commons as a political platform, the attention of Great Britain generally could be secured for Irish demands, and thus a full remedy could be obtained. That was, in his mind, the whole meaning and purpose of the policy of obstruction. 'We must compel the people to listen to us,' he said, 'and the only way to do it is by insisting that if our claims are not heard no other business shall be done. Then people outside Parliament will listen to us, and public opinion will begin to recognise the justice of our claim. Some great statesman in England will take up our cause, and public opinion will support him, and justice will be done in the end.'

Much was said and written at the time about Parnell's interview with the late Lord Carnarvon, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Some of Lord Carnarvon's own party accused him of having derogated from his high office by condescending to make terms with Parnell, whom it suited their humour to regard as a rebel and a person outside the range of a statesman's recognition. On the other hand, there were members

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of Lord Carnarvon's party who stoutly denied that Lord Carnarvon ever had any dealings with Parnell beyond the granting of an interview at Parnell's own request. I am in a position to tell a great part of the story, and the telling of it involves no discredit whatever either to Lord Carnarvon or to Parnell.

One day I received an intimation from an English Conservative Member of the House of Commons — I may mention his name, for there is no secrecy whatever about the matter — Sir Howard Vincent, to the effect that Lord Carnarvon was anxious to have a meeting with Parnell, and asking me if I could bring it about. I at once expressed my entire willingness to help in bringing about such a meeting, but I explained that I was not quite certain how Parnell might feel inclined to act, and I mentioned the fact that he was not then in town, and offered to put myself into communication with him. It was then thought better that I should see Lord Carnarvon myself in the first instance, and there was an exchange of letters between him and me on the subject. The immediate result was that Lord Carnarvon wrote to me from the Vice-Regal Lodge in Dublin, saying that he expected to be in London within a few days, and asking if it would be convenient to me that our meeting should take place on the following Saturday at any time between one and three in the afternoon, at No. 1 Grosvenor Square. The house suggested by Lord Carnarvon as a place of meeting was the house of Sir Howard Vincent. I at once accepted the proposed arrangement, and I met Lord Carnarvon at the place appointed. We had a very friendly talk about the condition of things in Ireland, and the possibility of some policy being adopted by the Government which might meet the wishes of the Irish National representatives

and the Irish people. Lord Carnarvon distinctly told me that for his own part he was prepared to go as far in the direction of Home Rule as either Parnell or I could desire. But he did not convey to me, and I am sure did not intend to convey, the idea that he was speaking on behalf of Lord Salisbury's Government. What I understood was that he spoke for himself alone, but that he had some hope of being able to bring over his colleagues to his own views on the subject, if Parnell and he could agree upon some course of policy which would be approved of by the Irish people, and which could safely be recommended to the consideration of the Conservative Government. I undertook to explain his views to Parnell, and to induce Parnell to meet him at the earliest opportunity. I saw Parnell soon afterwards, and the result was that he met Lord Carnarvon, but not at Sir Howard Vincent's house; for Parnell objected to the air of mystery which might be supposed to surround a meeting arranged at the house of one who could not be directly a party to any understanding between the Viceroy of Ireland and the leader of the Irish National Representatives. The meeting took place, but I was not present at it, and only know from what Parnell told me that it seemed to him to give some hope of a satisfactory understanding with the Government. I did not understand from Parnell that there was any talk of a pledge or promise on either side; only that each would do his best to bring about a satisfactory arrangement.

Not long after, I met Lord Carnarvon at dinner in the house of Sir Francis and Lady Jeune, and during the course of the evening he took an opportunity of telling me that he had not been able to bring all his colleagues round to his way of thinking, and that, therefore, the negotiations, if I may call them so, had come

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to an end. He told me that some of his colleagues had been greatly influenced by a speech or statement of some kind made by Parnell at a meeting, or to a newspaper interviewer, in which Parnell had said that he did not expect much from the Tories in the direction of Home Rule, and that he feared the country would have to wait for any policy of that kind until Gladstone came into power. This statement, Lord Carnarvon said, seemed to convince some of his colleagues that it would be hopeless to enter into any understanding with Parnell; and so there was an end of the matter. I have a distinct recollection, however, of Lord Carnarvon's assuring me that if he could have had a longer time to impress his ideas upon his colleagues he still believed he might have carried his point. This is really all that I know about the matter; and there was nothing in the whole business to reflect anything but credit and honour on the purposes alike of Lord Carnarvon and of Parnell. It was stated at the time that the first suggestion for a meeting between the two came from Parnell, and not from Lord Carnarvon. I can only say that, so far as I know, the preliminary negotiations were conducted entirely through me, and that the first suggestion I ever received on the subject came from Sir Howard Vincent, acting on behalf of the Viceroy of Ireland, and in whose house I met by arrangement the Viceroy himself. I may say, too, that I had some difficulty in prevailing on Parnell to meet Lord Carnarvon privately, for at that time Parnell was strongly opposed to all private arrangements with leading Members of any Government, and foresaw that in this case nothing was likely to come of any such conference. I could not understand then, and cannot understand now, why any fault should have been found with Lord Car-

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arnarvon for his honourable endeavour to come to some satisfactory agreement on public grounds with a man who wielded a power like that of Parnell, and a man who had always shown that he was ready to meet confidence with confidence, as he was always ready to meet hostility with hostility. I still believe it to have been a misfortune that Lord Carnarvon's views with regard to the Irish question were not shared at the time by his colleagues in the work of administration.

I have not much more to say of my long association with Parnell. Everybody knows how the split in the Irish National Party came about, and I need not dwell on that melancholy subject. The strain of that great disruption proved too much for Parnell's nerves and temper, and some of his old friends were positively bewildered by the vehemence and the violence of the language with which he assailed some of those who had stood by his side as long as they believed it possible for them to remain with him. For myself I am glad to say that even that disruption did not bring about any breach in the friendly private relations between him and me. I was well able to make allowance for the temper of a man driven almost to despair by the wreck of his great career, and of the great hope to which he had devoted so many years of his life. We met now and then in those later days, and always still met as friends, and I am glad now to remember that no unfriendly word ever passed between us in private. I remember well — I am not likely ever to forget — the last time I saw him. It was late one night. He had come to my house in Chelsea, where I was then living, to talk over some arrangements which had still to be made with regard to the financial liabilities coming down from the former and better days when the Party

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was still united. When we had disposed of these matters of business, we sat together for a long time and smoked cigars and talked on many subjects which had nothing to do with political controversies. It came to be three in the morning before he rose to go — we were used to all-night sittings in those days — and he then told me that he was going to drive to the Euston Hotel, get a short sleep there, and start for Ireland by the train leaving Euston station shortly after seven o'clock that morning. I remonstrated with him for sitting up so late under such conditions, told him I should not have allowed him to stay talking with me if I had known that he meant to cross to Ireland so soon, and expressed to him my strong fear that the incessant travelling and speech-making to which he was giving himself up, must do some permanent injury to his health. He seemed for the moment quite like his old self. He smiled the once familiar sweet smile, grasped my hand, and assured me that, on the contrary, he felt convinced that, in his present condition of mind, the travelling and the speech-making were really doing him good. I walked a little way with him to the nearest cab-stand, and then we parted. Before three weeks had passed away the world knew that he was dead. There is always a melancholy comfort to me in the thought that the last words interchanged between Parnell and me were words of friendliness and good-will.

CHAPTER XXX

FROUDE — FREEMAN

MY first recollections of Mr. Froude carry me back to some of the earlier years of my literary work in London. He used to attend occasionally at the meetings of the Newspaper Press Fund Committee, where his handsome, thoughtful face, his retiring ways, and his grave meditative demeanour reminded me somehow — I cannot tell why — of Nathaniel Hawthorne, as I had known him years before in Liverpool. But Froude had really none of Nathaniel Hawthorne's shyness and love for habitual silence. His manner when he got into conversation was always bright and genial, often became even careless and joyous, and presented a curious contrast with the gravity and stillness of his habitual demeanour. Froude was seldom seen at any kind of public assembly in those days. He was a member of some literary and scientific societies, and he occasionally gave a lecture at the Royal Institution or some other of the more stately halls devoted to literature, science, and art. He was always ready to show an interest in any effort which had to do with the remedy of a grievance or any improvement in the condition of the class of men who were unable to better their lot by their own unassisted strength. I remember taking part with Froude in a deputation to Lord Kimberley, then at the head of the Colonial Office, concerning one of the

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Colonial questions to which he afterwards devoted so much of his energy and his intellect. But he took no part in politics, and, indeed, hardly ever was heard of in political life. Nobody who was not intimately acquainted with him could have told at the time whether he ought to be described as a Liberal or as a Conservative, or whether he ever troubled his mind about the distinctions of political parties. He was apparently the sort of man whom one might have set down as a philosophical Radical, for the simple reason that he was a man of intellect and culture, that he certainly did not belong to the Manchester school, and that his turn of mind would hardly have allowed him to share in the opinions of the steady, old-fashioned Tories. But then, on the other hand, one would have sought in vain through his writings or his lectures for any evidences of sympathy with the views of Grote, or Stuart Mill, or Sir William Molesworth. Most of us who followed his literary career with deep interest were therefore inclined to rest satisfied with the conviction that he had no political opinions at all, and that his business in life was the construction of romantic history.

Many years later, when Froude took it into his head to try his skill at a work of fiction, an ill-natured critic said that Froude had always been set down as a roman-cist until in an unlucky hour he attempted to write a romance. There was always a curious contrast between the man himself and his works. Some of Froude's histories made for him innumerable enemies, who detested him because of what they considered his intolerable bigotry in historical controversy. He seemed to be filled with a positive hatred for the Catholic Church, and for all the historical personages who identified themselves with its teachings. Yet Froude had many friends who

were devoted Catholics, and who declared that they found in him personally an utter absence of all anti-Catholic prejudice. I remember well an incident of liberality on his part which created some sensation at the time, and is now, perhaps, almost entirely forgotten. There was an official in the Record or State Paper Office of England who had become a Roman Catholic, and was, like most English Catholics, especially converts, rather strict and zealous. This gentleman, Mr. Turnbull, happened to be employed some years ago in arranging, copying, and calendaring the Elizabethan State Papers. The Evangelical Alliance Society got up a cry against him. They insisted that to employ a Roman Catholic in such a task was only to place in his hands the means of falsifying a most important period of English history, and they argued that the temptation would be too strong for any man like Mr. Turnbull to resist. There sprang up one of those painful and ignoble disputations which are even still only too common in England when religious prejudice gets a chance of raising an alarm. I am sorry to say that so influential a journal as the 'Athenæum' joined in the clamour for the dismissal of Mr. Turnbull, who was not accused of having done anything wrong, but only of being placed in a position which might, perhaps, tempt some base creature to do wrong. Mr. Turnbull was a gentleman of the highest honour, and, unfortunately for himself, an enthusiast in the very work which then occupied him. Mr. Froude was at that time engaged in studying the period of history which employed Mr. Turnbull's labours. The opinions of the two men were utterly at variance. Mr. Turnbull must have thought Froude's work in the rehabilitation of Henry VIII. and the glorification of Elizabeth positively detestable. But Mr. Froude bore

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public testimony to the honour and integrity of Mr. Turnbull. 'Mr. Turnbull,' Froude wrote, 'could have felt no sympathy with the work in which I was engaged; but he spared no pains to be of use to me, and in admitting me to a share of his private room enabled me to witness the ability and integrity with which he discharged his own duties.' Bigotry prevailed, however; Mr. Turnbull was removed from his place, and died soon after, disappointed and embittered.

The whole story is thoroughly characteristic of Froude. While he was engaged in writing history he allowed his own theories to carry him whither they would, and as he had constructed a positive historical theory for himself about the political workings of Catholicism, it seemed to be an article of faith with him that history must shape itself out in obedience to that theory. But if any instance came under his own personal observation in which some living man was treated with injustice because he happened to be a Catholic, then the historical theory was all forgotten, and Froude became the fearless champion of the victim to a prejudice which he himself had done most to foster. As he had a theory about the historical workings of religion, so he had a theory about the historical workings of race. To the public in general Froude always seemed to be a writer who was filled with a positive detestation of Irishmen as a body. Many of my countrymen at one time regarded him as a bitter and inveterate enemy of the whole Irish race, and, indeed, there were only too many evidences in some of his writings to justify such a belief. Yet Froude had many close Irish friends, and used at one time to reside for a part of every year in Ireland, where he had some property, and I believe his relations with the Irish peasantry who lived near him were always

those of friendship and kindliness. But he could not restrain his pen, and he was always saying something about Ireland and Irishmen which filled the Celtic breast with a bitterness of resentment that certainly did not seem unnatural or even unreasonable.

I do not say that the resentment did not seem unreasonable to me, because I was obviously not an impartial judge on such a question; but I may assume that the 'Spectator' newspaper was not blinded by any passion of sympathy with the Irish race, and yet I remember well how the 'Spectator' wrote about some of Mr. Froude's views of Irish life and Irish character. The 'Spectator' declared: 'It may be not unfairly said that Mr. Froude simply loathes the Irish people; not consciously, perhaps, for he professes the reverse. But a certain bitter grudge breaks out despite his will, now and then. It colours all his tropes. It adds a sting to the casual allusions of his language. When he wants a figure of speech to express the relation between the two islands, he compares the Irish to a kennel of fox-hounds, and the English to their master, and declares that what the Irish want is a master who knows that he is a master and means to continue master.' In his occasional studies of contemporary Ireland from the window of his shooting lodge in Kerry, Mr. Froude exhibited the same strange mixture of candour as to fact and blind prejudice as to conclusion which so oddly characterizes his history. He recounts deliberately the most detestable projects — he himself calls them detestable; the word is his, not mine — avowed to him by the agents of great Irish landlords, and yet his sympathy is wholly with the agents and against the occupiers. He tells in one instance, with perfect delight, of a mean and vulgar exhibition of triumphant malice which he says an agent, a

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friend of his, paraded for the humiliation of an evicted and contumacious tenant. The 'Spectator' asks in wonder whether it can be possible that 'Mr. Froude, an English gentleman by birth and education, an Oxford Fellow, is not ashamed to relate this act as an heroic feat'? Indeed, Mr. Froude seems to associate, in Ireland, only with the 'agent' class, and to take all his views of things from them. His testimony is therefore about as valuable as that of a foreigner who, forty years ago, should have taken his opinions of slavery in the South from the judgment and conversation of the plantation overseers. The 'Spectator' observed, with calm severity, that Mr. Froude's unlucky accounts of his Irish experiences were 'a comical example of the way in which an acute and profound mind can become dull to the sense of what is manly, just, and generous, by the mere atmosphere of association.' But there is still something to be added to this story of Mr. Froude's Irish experiences; and I mention the whole thing only to illustrate the peculiar character of Mr. Froude's emotional temperament, which so often renders him untrustworthy as a historian. In the particular instance on which the 'Spectator' commented, it turned out that Mr. Froude was entirely mistaken. He had misunderstood from beginning to end what his friend the agent told him. The agent, the landlord (a peer of the realm), and others hastened to contradict the historian. There never had been any such eviction or any such offensive display. Mr. Froude himself wrote to acknowledge publicly that he had been entirely mistaken. He seemed, indeed, to have always had some doubt of the story he was publishing; for he sent a proof of the page to the agent 'to be corrected in case I had misunderstood him.' But the agent's alterations, 'unluckily,

did not reach me in time'; and as Mr. Froude could not wait for the truth he published the error. Thus, indeed, is history written! This was Mr. Froude's published version of a statement made *viva voce* to himself; and his version was wrong in every particular—in fact, in substance, in detail, in purport, in everything! I venture to think that this little incident is eminently characteristic, and throws a strong light on some of the errors of the 'History of England.'

Many years after those Irish experiences of Froude's to which I have been referring, I had the courage to get into a dispute with him about the picture which he had drawn of Wolfe Tone, the leader of the Irish Rebellion of 1798. It was in Froude's own house, and I may say, in passing, that a more delightful host never welcomed any guest. I strongly objected to Froude's estimate of Wolfe Tone, who had always been one of my political heroes, and I asked him how it was that he came to dislike Wolfe Tone so much. Froude assured me, with his blindest and most gracious manner, that, so far from disliking Tone, he had a great admiration for him. Then we came to particulars. I asked him why, if he admired Tone, he had been at such pains to picture Tone as an ignoble and worthless creature, and why did he try to make him out to be a drunkard? I could anticipate what his answer would be to this question, for I knew that in one of his books he had set Tone down as a drunkard because of certain entries made by Tone in a journal which he had kept during a season spent in London. There can be no doubt that in his journal Tone did make the record more than once 'drunk last night.' I appealed to Froude's own judgment, and asked him, as a man and a brother, to tell me what was the fair and obvious inference as to a man's character,

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who, during the days of Pitt and Fox and Sheridan and Dundas, had been at the pains to note in his diary the fact that on certain occasions he had got drunk. 'Did Pitt, did Fox, did Sheridan,' I asked, 'ever take the trouble of making an entry in his diary to the effect that he had been drunk? Was it not the custom of those eminent persons, and of most of the men in whose society they moved, to get drunk night after night? Is it not, then, only reasonable to deduce from Wolfe Tone's special entries in his diary the conclusion that the occurrences recorded were unusual events in his life? Is not the fair deduction to be drawn from such evidence that Wolfe Tone was habitually a sober man, and that he recorded the events because they were unusual events of his life?' Froude listened to my arguments with an amused attention, and said at last, 'Well, I daresay you are quite in the right—I see it now from your point of view; but I had not thought of that at the time, I thought the entries made too good a point to be lost; and, in any case,' he added, with a smile of droll humour, 'Wolfe Tone would not mind either way.'

It was impossible to argue the question seriously any further, and I am afraid a dissertation on the proper spirit in which the historian ought to endeavour to get at the correct interpretation of his evidences would not have greatly disturbed Froude's buoyant good humour. I said to him that Wolfe Tone had been rather unlucky lately in his English critics, for one writer, high in station, had set him down as a man totally devoid of any military talents whatever, although Carnot, Napoleon, and the Duke of Wellington had formed an entirely different opinion of his capacity. Froude was much amused by the cock-sureness of the eminent civilian writer who could thus easily dispose of the views of

such military critics as Carnot, Napoleon, and the Duke of Wellington. He saw the fun of that quite clearly, and he said some amusing things about the rashness of the civilian writer; but he evidently thought his own mistake as to the inference to be drawn from the entries in the diary was a matter of no serious consequence whatever, and only deserved to be mentioned and dismissed with a pleasant passing smile. It was hard in ordinary conversation to get Froude to take history very seriously. But that I had good reason to believe in his absolute sincerity, I should sometimes have been inclined to think that Froude put on an affectation of utter carelessness as to the manner in which history was composed, so long as the history was made bright and entertaining to the reader. Despite the romance 'The Two Chiefs of Dunboy,' which he wrote in his later years, I am still convinced that Froude had above all things the genius of the romancist. When for one reason or another, a particular conception of some historical figure flashed itself upon his mind, he seems to have gone to work at the development and completion of that figure, with the artistic steadfastness and absorption of a painter who has caught some sudden inspiration, and whose first and most conscientious duty is to work out his own idea. Suppose, to take a very obvious illustration, a painter is inspired with the idea of picturing a mermaid, he would not for a moment be inclined to abandon his task merely because it was pointed out to him that a creature half woman and half fish could not possibly be found in nature.

I think Froude looked at his own art in much the same sort of way; he had become possessed with his own idea of a Henry VIII., or a Mary Stuart, and he felt bound to follow out his own idea, no matter what

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the evidence might be to show that no such creature as he was describing ever could have existed. Even the very references he gives as marginal notes are evidences of the same curious and unconscious indifference to historical accuracy. When a man writing history makes a certain statement on his page, and in proof of his accuracy refers us to certain specified authorities, we may be sure at least that, for the moment, he fully believes the references will furnish proof of his correctness. Assuredly, no human being would deliberately refer us to certain distinct authorities in proof of his statements if he were not satisfied, in his own mind, that the authorities would bear out the truth of what he had said. But we find again and again in Froude's histories that we are referred in confidence to certain authorities as if they must settle the question for ever; and, behold, when we turn to the authorities, we discover to our surprise that they do not even profess to tell us anything of the kind. We are told of something as if it were a positive fact, and we are referred to some authority as affording us contemporary evidence of the fact, and we hunt out the authority and there we find that the whole story is only mentioned as a rumour coming in from nobody knows where, and for the truth of which there is nothing that even pretends to be actual evidence. The result is very often that the unintentionally deceptive character of these cited authorities only tends to throw a doubt on passages in the history for which no authority is cited, and about which no doubt might otherwise have been entertained. We feel ourselves inclined to say, 'Here is a statement for the truth of which the author feels bound to refer us to formal written evidence, and we find on looking into the matter that the alleged evidence is no evidence at

all. What, then, are we to think of the value of other statements made apparently on no authority whatever but that of the author's own judgment or assumption?"

One is reminded occasionally of some of the notes which Gibbon appends to his text. We read some of the pages describing the doings of the Empress Theodora and her husband, and we are referred in a footnote again and again to a passage from Procopius as authority for each statement. But if we turn to Procopius himself we shall find that the Roman historian when he tells us of atrocities committed by Justinian, and the shameful practices of Theodora, tells us also that Justinian had a way of suddenly disappearing from human sight altogether, and of occasionally walking about with the head of some unsightly lower animal substituted by enchantment for the head which was his own human property. Naturally we are inclined to ask why we should be expected to give unlimited faith to one story which Procopius tells of Justinian, when it is absolutely impossible for the most credulous amongst us to give one moment's credence to the other story. No one supposes that Gibbon wilfully meant to deceive, or that he deliberately abstained from quoting the magical tales of Procopius lest he should thereby disparage the credit of Procopius in all the rest of his narration. Gibbon liked to believe the one set of stories, and so he called Procopius in as his authority for repeating them; he could not possibly lend a moment's belief to the other set of stories, and so he quietly dropped them altogether out of his consideration. Froude appears to have adopted a somewhat similar plan of action. He was determined to take a positive view of each case, and he referred to certain authorities from which he had drawn his impression, without taking

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the pains to consider whether the authorities were of a nature to induce any impartial mind to come to the same conclusion. It used to be said of Froude, by some of his hostile critics, that he did not understand the meaning of quotation marks—in other words, that when he appeared to be quoting the precise language of some text he did not always take much trouble to be sure that he was really quoting it and not recomposing it according to his own recollections and his own assumptions. Yet it was impossible to know Mr. Froude and still to believe him capable of any deliberate perversion of facts. He had, in a certain sense, a ‘wild and skipping spirit’; he confounded impressions with certainties; and when once he had formed in his mind a picture of a man or a woman, his only duty seemed to be to make the work in its completion consistent with its original conception.

Froude was for a long time the editor of ‘Fraser’s Magazine,’ to which, indeed, he contributed some of the finest of his shorter writings. He was assisted in the work of editing by my old friend William Allingham, the poet whom I have already mentioned in this book as one of the closest friends of the late Lord Tennyson. Froude, during his editorship, showed a constant readiness to open his pages to the expression of all forms of opinion, no matter how unpopular some of them might seem to be, provided their championship bore the aspect of sincerity and displayed any genuine literary skill. ‘Fraser’ under his management became somewhat like the ‘Fortnightly Review’ in its principle of admitting any sincere opinion to a public hearing, without regard to its accordance with the prevailing sentiment, and even though it ran directly counter to the recognised and established opinions of society. He was very quick

and eager to discover new talent, and had a willingness to run risks in that way, which, I think, is not a very common quality among the editors of leading periodicals. A young countryman of mine once sent him a sort of satirical novel dealing sometimes with personages and incidents belonging to real life, and sometimes venturing into the realms of rather extravagant imagination, all done with a distinctly moral purpose from the satirist's point of view, and designed, with the confident ardour of inexperience, to aid in the perfection of our judicial system.

There was a great deal of audacious cleverness in the tale, but it certainly would not have seemed to most of us likely to captivate the attention of the story-reading public. Let it be added, too, that the satire dealt, not with any defect in the English system which might have had some natural interest for the ordinary London reader, but with the Irish system, about which the ordinary London reader would not at that time have cared two straws. Furthermore, it was written avowedly by an Irishman and Catholic, with whose opinions and with whose notions of popular reform Froude could not be supposed to have the slightest natural sympathy. Yet Froude was captivated with the story, and recognised the merits of its purpose; and he could not refuse the author a chance of obtaining a hearing from the public at large. The story was published, and the majority of qualified critics recognised its marked ability and its originality; but I am afraid that the general reader only turned over the pages in order to come to something more distinctly to his taste. The author, unhappily, did not live long enough to obtain that place in public estimation which Froude and some others of us believed him likely to gain. But I always thought it a generous act on

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Froude's part to run the risk of impairing the circulation of his magazine by venturing on such an experiment. Had I not many other reasons to regret the death of the young writer I should have regretted it, if only because it deprived Froude of the credit which he otherwise might, in all probability, have obtained of having discovered a new author, and given to an obscure young man his first chance of making a fame.

Another young man of promise, to whom Froude held out a helping hand, had begun life as a working engineer, with little or no education beyond that which he gave to himself at every spare moment when his daily toil was done. This young man had written for the 'Evening Star' several articles, which he signed 'A Journeyman Engineer,' describing, in language at once picturesque and realistic, the daily life and ways of the class with which he was best acquainted, and to whose struggles he desired to call the attention of the outer world. He was very anxious to have an opportunity of publishing something in a first-class magazine, and he sent on chance a contribution to the editor of 'Fraser.' Froude read the article; and saw that there was marked and original ability in it. He encouraged the author, treated him with characteristic friendliness and kindness, invited him to continue his contributions to 'Fraser,' and promised him that every article he sent should be carefully considered with a view to its publication. I believe Froude was greatly prepossessed by the earnestness, at once frank and simple, with which the young working engineer assured him that he did not want any of his articles taken merely out of a charitable desire to give a poor fellow a helping hand, and that his only hope was that if Mr. Froude found any of his articles really good enough for publication he would give them

as early a chance as he could. The 'Journeyman Engineer' afterwards published two books, one called 'Johnny Robinson' — a series of sketches drawn from the life which he understood so well and could picture so vividly; and the other a more ambitious attempt, a novel — an actual novel — called 'The Queen of the Needledrivers!' — a wonderful Dutch painting of the characters and the scenes with which he had set out to deal. Both books received very favourable reviews from our leading critical journals.

Now, it may not seem to the ordinary reader very much to say in praise of Mr. Froude that he took some kindly interest in a young and totally unknown writer, gave up some of his time to the task of finding out whether the young man had really anything in him, and having formed a favourable opinion, went out of his way to bid the new-comer be of good cheer, and helped him to make himself known to the educated public. All that, I say, may seem but a small effort of kindness to the ordinary reader; but if the ordinary reader only knew how the editor of every first-class magazine is pestered and overwhelmed by unsolicited contributions, how difficult it is for him with any expenditure of time and trouble to give a fair consideration to half the articles poured in upon him, and how easy it would be for him to fill his pages with the writings of men and women whose mere names would, at all events, be a guarantee that what they wrote was good enough to print, he would better appreciate the value of the prompt kindness which Mr. Froude showed towards his humble contributor. Everybody who has any acquaintance with literature will know that the first difficulty which meets the young writer who has no friends and no recommendations, is the difficulty of getting any

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editor even to look at his manuscript. My friend the 'Journeyman Engineer' found no such difficulty, and if the ordinary reader could only have heard the words in which the 'Journeyman Engineer' spoke to me of Mr. Froude's kindness to him, the ordinary reader would admit that I am not wrong in thinking Mr. Froude's action in this case well worthy of distinctive mention. It was hardly ever my fortune to agree with Froude in any of the principal views which he expressed, or the estimates of historical men and women which he devoted his genius and magnificent style to recommend to the public; I have no memories of the man himself but those which remind me of a genial and a noble nature, of a delightful companion, and a sympathetic friend.

There is an association of contrast as well as an association of likeness, and it is no doubt this association of contrast that makes it seem natural to bring together the name of Mr. Froude and the name of Mr. Freeman. No two historians could possibly have worked at history with a more utter diversity of inspiration, method, and style. The two men, as everybody knows, were brought into almost incessant controversy; sometimes, indeed, talked at each other where no direct controversy was acknowledged on either side, and the students of either school were constantly confuting Froude out of the words of Freeman, or hurling Froude's volume at Freeman's head. I have certainly no intention of reviving the controversy, as my purpose is only to recall some memories of the men. I only came to know Freeman personally during the later years of his life, although, of course, I had studied his works with attention, with admiration, and even with reverence. In those later years Freeman was drawn a good deal into political work, and even went so far as to contest an English

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constituency in the Liberal cause. He took a deep interest also in the Irish National movement, and this fact naturally brought me into occasional association with him. Now, I had always somehow been led to think of Freeman as a man of rather overbearing temperament, filled with intellectual pride, impatient of opposing opinion, and apt to treat his intellectual inferiors with the manner of one accustomed to acknowledged supremacy; I found him entirely different from the man I had expected to meet. There was a sort of genial roughness about him — perhaps I ought rather to call it a sort of rough heartiness — familiar to all who have lived in some of the midland or northern counties of England, and which reminded me a good deal occasionally of the late William Edward Forster, with whom one could positively wrangle over politics without ceasing to be friendly. But I found nothing in Freeman of the domineering, intellectual dictator. On the contrary, I found him most pleasant as a companion, considerate in all his ways, patient in his dealing with difference of opinion, and never allowing those with whom he conversed to become borne down by the consciousness of their intellectual inferiority.

My daughter and I spent a short time with him and his family in his house at Oxford, and we brought away none but the most delightful memories of his kindness as a host. I was particularly interested in the working arrangements of his study, which he showed and explained with a certain degree of natural pride. One important part of the arrangements consisted of a very long, narrow table, stretching mid-way down almost the whole length of the long room. The convenience of this arrangement consisted in the fact that he could have all the particular books he was likely to require

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for each day's work laid out, on their backs with open leaves, along the table, so as to spare him the trouble of incessantly running to his shelves and taking down each time a new volume, and then, when he supposed he had done with it, putting it back into its place and out of his way, only perhaps to find, a few minutes later, that he wanted to refer to the book again, and must drag it from its shelf anew. Freeman himself expatiated with great delight on the advantages of this plan, and showed how the books that he wanted for each day's work could find ample space to lie outspread without encroaching on each other. He declared that it was always a mystery to him how any author could get through his work satisfactorily who allowed his books to be piled on the top of each other, so that they had constantly to be readjusted, or who could not verify a citation or a date without having to go to his shelves and take some particular volume down every time in the day he wanted to consult it. He dwelt with amusing and humorous exaggeration on the priceless simplicity of his method, and on the extraordinary vagueness of mind which induced so many authors to pile one book upon another. Freeman also talked with much humour about the curious prepossession of fixed belief which made foreigners in general assume that every English author must necessarily have London for his dwelling-place. He declared that he had met many distinguished foreigners who found it almost impossible to believe that he did not live in London and never proposed to make London his home. What especially surprised and charmed me in Freeman was the amount of genuine humour which he could set playing, without effort, around the most ordinary subject. I might have expected grim sarcasm or contempt displaying itself in

flashes of literary satire; but what I certainly did not expect was the rich and quaint yet quiet humour with which Freeman could illustrate at will every argument and every topic.

There was some controversy going on at Oxford about the degree of liberality which ought to be allowed in the lending of library books to students. Freeman was in favour of the utmost stretch of liberality, except, of course, in the case of volumes the loss of which could never be repaired. With some men, he said, a book is a fetish; with me it is only an instrument, a tool. And then followed an outpouring of combined wit and wisdom on the fads of the so-called book-lovers, whose whole heart is in some particular edition, and not at all in the teaching which the book is supposed to give. We had many talks on all manner of subjects, and the more I listened the more I became impressed by the wealth of varied knowledge which Freeman was able to bring to bear, at will, on any topic, even the most commonplace, that came up in the course of conversation. I could not help thinking that his stores of knowledge lay out along the table of his mind, just as the books he needed for his day's work lay out along the table of his study, not piled confusedly one upon another, or all stowed carefully out of reach on the library shelves of his memory. Many of us authors, to be sure, have to work in small rooms, and must have our books piled about us in bewildering confusion, if we are not content to take down each one as we want it, and then put it back on the shelf again. Then, too, it has also to be said that not many of us authors, even if we had Freeman's large room to work in, and his long table on which to spread out our books and manuscripts, would have minds orderly enough to enable us to lay out in

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advance just the books we should be likely to need for the work of each particular day. I had but few opportunities of meeting Freeman after that most delightful time I spent with him at his home in Oxford; but I never met him without being more and more impressed by the fact that he was one of the few men whose intellectual greatness can exalt, instead of humiliating, the inferior mortals with whom they are brought into association.

CHAPTER XXXI

TWO COLONIAL GOVERNORS

‘FRIENDS who in thy spring-time knew thee.’ These words come into my memory from a song by Thomas Moore, in which the poet wishes bright dreams to some object of his sympathy, and utters the hope that among the forms which those dreams conjure up may, above all, be those of ‘Friends who in thy spring-time knew thee.’ I think of the words and all they suggest, because I am about to say something concerning two distinguished men, no longer living, whom I knew, and who knew me in my spring-time. By a singular chance these two men, both public servants of the Empire, were brought more than once into a direct antagonism of policy and responsibility in their business of Colonial Government. I am speaking of the late Lord Rosmead, and the late Sir John Pope Hennessy. Lord Rosmead was known to the world, during by far the greater part of his working lifetime, as Sir Hercules Robinson. When I first came to know him he was only Captain Robinson, then belonging to a regiment of Fusiliers. He was a very young man at the time, and had just obtained his first public appointment of any kind as the head of a Commission, charged by the Conservative Government of the day to inquire into the condition of fairs and markets in Ireland. The Commission was composed of a Chief Commissioner, an Assistant Com-

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missioner, and a Secretary, the Chief Commissioner being Captain Robinson. The Commission started from Dublin, and worked its way southward, holding a court of inquiry in each town or village through which it passed, and hearing evidence as to the grievances in the existing system of market arrangements and market tolls. One of the duties of the Secretary was to take a full note of the evidence, in order that the Commissioners might prepare a report in the form of a Blue Book for the instruction of the Government.

By the time the Commission reached Cork, the Secretary had seen reason to resign his office and return to Dublin. I was then attached to the reporting staff of the 'Cork Examiner,' and it became part of my business to supply to the paper an account of the proceedings of the Commission. Captain Robinson and his colleague were pleased with my reports, and they offered me the vacant place of Secretary to the Commission. I accepted the offer with great pleasure, and thus it came to pass that the first and only paid public appointment I ever held, or am ever likely to hold, was that of Secretary to the Commission presided over by Captain Robinson, who was afterwards to become Lord Rosmead. Therefore I may be excused if I give way to a little burst of self-glorification, and vauntingly declare that Lord Rosmead and I began our public careers together. The Commission kept at work for several months after I became its official, and we visited all the market villages and towns in Ireland, into which the Commissioners had not previously made their way. Captain Robinson was, as I have said, a very young man — and he was a very handsome young man — with bright eyes full of humour, buoyant animal spirits, and a singularly attractive manner. We should have had a very dull

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time of it but for him, because our evenings were generally spent in dismal little country towns where there was absolutely nothing to be done in the way of amusement when once the sitting of the Court was over. I was reminded of some of those days by a witty description which, many years later, I heard Lady Dorothy Nevill give of certain country places where, after the last post had come in, nothing but a miracle could occur. In the case of our Market Commission, however, the miracle did happen, even in the dullest of country towns, for Captain Robinson's power of keeping us alive seemed to me nothing short of miraculous. We spent all our evenings together—and what evenings they were!—of laughter and humour, and anecdote and jest, and retort and general jollity. Mirth has admitted me to many of her crews since those far-off days of which I am writing now; but I never enjoyed evenings more thoroughly than those evenings in the dull little country towns, which were brightened by the unfailing good spirits and inexhaustible wit and humour of Captain Robinson. He had wonderful powers of mimicry, and could reproduce the voice, the gestures, and the whole manner of some person totally unlike himself, with a positively artistic fidelity to the peculiarities of the original. He did not render his portraits in broad caricature; he simply set the originals before us with just enough of illustrative humour to make them delightfully ridiculous. Captain Robinson's humours had, I am sorry to say, one damaging effect upon my youthful mind, a defect which utterly declined to vanish with vanishing youth. I could never since those days in the Irish market towns feel quite serious in mind when making one of a deputation on some important purpose to a statesman or a great official. The evil

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was wrought in this way. The Commissioners had to receive deputations from the municipal authorities in many of the towns through which we passed. Each deputation came in due form, headed by the Mayor or the Chairman of the Town Commissioners, or some other representative of the local community. Captain Robinson received each deputation with a bland and deferential grace, which was quite touching to behold. He listened with an air of gravity and attention to all the representations which the visitors desired to make; he encouraged, and even invited, further expressions of opinion, and drew out some hitherto silent member by appealing to him for an exposition of his own personal views. When all the deputation desired to say had been said, Captain Robinson, in a few sentences of eloquent gravity, assured his visitors that the Commissioners had taken due account of all their representations, that the Government should be made fully acquainted with the wants and wishes of so important a locality, and that the Commissioners would not fail to impress upon Her Majesty's Ministers the necessity of giving the promptest attention to the representations which the Commissioners intended to present in the form of a report. Thereupon the deputation withdrew, evidently delighted beyond measure by the grave and sympathetic reception which the Commissioners, and more especially the Chief Commissioner, had been kind enough to give to their appeal. Nothing could surely be more satisfactory, more orderly, more dignified, more thoroughly official. But then, when the doors were closed, the Chief Commissioner at once proceeded to favour his colleague and his Secretary with an extemporaneous imitation of the voice, the accents, the gestures and the eloquent style, of this, that, and the other member of the deputation.

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Never since those days have I formed one of a group waiting on some great public personage who listened to us gravely and attentively, and bowed us out courteously, without feeling an uneasy suspicion that the moment our backs were turned the great personage went to work to amuse some colleague with a droll imitation of our speeches and our manners. I have thus often been led to think of Captain Robinson in the Treasury Buildings, or Westminster Palace, or the offices of the Board of Trade, while a score of years and thousands of miles lay between him and me.

But I must do justice to Robinson. When the mimicry of the departed deputation was over Robinson always set himself down with earnestness and patience to examine into the nature of every complaint that had been made, every grievance that had been described, every mode of remedy that had been suggested. Even at this time I could see that he had the inborn gift of administration. Not a word said by any member of any deputation was lost upon him or failed to receive the most careful consideration from him, even though he did make fun of some of the delegates, when their backs were turned, for the amusement of his travelling companions. Robinson was a splendid reader, he had a fine voice, with a wonderful variety of tone which gave telling and appropriate expression to every sentence he read aloud. He beguiled many a long evening for us by reading out scenes from popular novels. He read out to us the whole of Charles Lever's amusing story 'The Dodd Family Abroad,' and the varieties of Irish accent which are introduced into the story were illustrated with perfect accuracy by his dramatic delivery. The worthy Mrs. Dodd makes frequent reference in the course of the story to a respected uncle of hers of whom

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she is very proud, and who bore the name of Jones McCarthy. Robinson was delighted with the happy timeliness of the name coming up just then, and he promptly christened me Jones McCarthy, and Jones McCarthy I remained, so far as he was concerned, until the end of the Commission and for some time after. Then our ways divided; I accepted an engagement on a Liverpool newspaper, and remained for some seven years a resident of the city by the Mersey. Later, as I have already told my readers, I went to seek my fortune in London and settled there. I heard of Hercules Robinson from time to time. It was easy to follow his fortunes, for he was soon made a Colonial Governor, and the newspapers told us all about his administration of this Colony and that, and he became a distinguished public man. The better part of a life-time, one might say, passed away between my last meeting with him in Ireland and my next meeting with him in London. He was in London for a season, just after some important events in the story of one of his Colonial administrations, and I wrote, in the 'Daily News' an account of his early services in the old days of the Irish Fairs and Markets Commission. I did not sign my name to the article, but I closed with the line from Tennyson's 'In Memoriam': 'Does my old friend remember me?' I left the town shortly after for a holiday visit at a seaside place in Lancashire, and while there I received this letter, which I venture to publish:

'84 CADOGAN PLACE, August 3, 1896.

'MY DEAR MCCARTHY,—I too was very sorry not to find you in London. I was quite touched by your reference to me in the "Daily News," and, as your old friend did indeed remember you, he made his way to

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your house as soon as ever he was able to get about. I often think of our association on the Fairs and Markets Commission — now nearly forty-four years ago — and recall the cheery evenings we always spent after the day's work was over. I wonder if you remember — and the bottle of choice whisky which someone sent us, which he finished whilst we were doing our after dinner's work!!

‘I am much gratified at the terms in which you refer to my recent work in South Africa. I propose returning to the Cape on the 15th inst. for a short time, and if I am spared to come back to the old country next summer will hope then to have a long chat with you.

Most sincerely yours,

‘HERCULES ROBINSON.’

I only saw Sir Hercules Robinson three times, I think, in London — once at the house of Lady Jeune; once at that of Lady Dorothy Nevill; and once at a dinner-party given by an American lady, who was then living in the Chesham Place region. We made hopeful arrangements for other meetings, but the Destinies, and his duties, interfered, and I never saw him as Lord Rosmead. That he turned out a great Colonial administrator never surprised me in the least. From my first acquaintance with him I had recognised his force of character, his originality of thought, his quick, keen judgment, his aptitude for business and the untiring patience with which he could master all its details. It was a somewhat curious stroke of Fate which only allowed me to know him personally just at the opening of his career and just at its close. The opinion which I had formed of him at the first was only confirmed and justified at the last.

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My acquaintance with Sir John Pope Hennessy goes back still farther than my acquaintance with Lord Rosmead. Hennessy and I were boys together in the city of Cork. He was four years younger than I, but we were friends and comrades, and grew up together. We spoke in the local debating societies; we were members of the Temperance Institute founded by Father Mathew; we were often oarsmen together in the same boat on the River Lee and in Queenstown harbour; we were constant visitors at each other's houses, and were comrades in many a youthful adventure. John Hennessy was a singularly clever boy, full of courage and self-confidence, and inspired by an evident ambition to distinguish himself in the world. As we grew up our ways naturally divided. Hennessy's family had some influence, and a situation was obtained for him in one of the Government Departments which had to do with National Education. He therefore went to live in London, and I lost sight of him for a considerable time. I heard of him, and from him, every now and then, and it soon became clear that he was advancing himself in the world of London. He always had a great taste and aptitude for politics, and he made the acquaintance of Mr. Disraeli. Hennessy had a high admiration for the great Tory leader, and the great Tory leader had then and always a generous inclination to advance the fortunes of brilliant young men. After a while Hennessy's friends in Cork heard with surprise that he was about to present himself as candidate for the representation of an Irish constituency in the House of Commons.

At that time the Catholics of England and Ireland were much displeased with the Liberal, or I should rather say the Whig, Party because of the Ecclesiastical

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Titles Act, and were well disposed towards a sort of alliance with the Conservatives. John Pope Hennessy created a new character in politics — the character of an ardent young Irish Catholic and Nationalist who was also a devoted member of the Conservative Party. The new character took immensely. Hennessy stood for an Irish county, and was elected. He became from the first a distinct success in the House of Commons. He had graceful manners, a clear voice, and a presence which suggested aristocratic birth and training. He spoke with great ease and fluency, he got up all his facts carefully, and while he could hold out in speech as long as his leaders desired him to do, he always had the manner of one who wishes to keep close to the point, and to waste no time in unnecessary rhetoric. There was something quite new to the House in the presence of a young Nationalist Irishman who made no pretence at floridity of eloquence, and talked as if talking were a practical business and not a declamatory art. Hennessy acquired in a very short time a surprising mastery of all the regulations and ways and peculiarities of the House of Commons. He had an audacity which nothing could possibly dismay or even discourage, while at the same time he never seemed intrusive or overbearing. He would argue with Lord Palmerston on a question of foreign policy, or with Gladstone on the details of a financial scheme. He took with the House and with the public, and he became a distinct social as well as political success. Edmund Yates introduced him into one of his novels as young Hope Ennythink, the new Irish member, and pictured him as astonishing the House and town by his courage, his self-confidence and his cleverness.

Hennessy proclaimed himself openly a follower of

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Disraeli, and Disraeli was very kind to him, and made no objection to his occasionally bringing forward some motion in favour of Irish National claims, or some demand for a greater extension of civil liberties to Catholics. Disraeli recognised the abilities of the young man, and saw that he could be made useful. One evening Pope Hennessy lounged into the House at a period when the dinner-hour was approaching, and the House was gradually thinning out. He found that a debate on some question of foreign policy had unexpectedly arisen, and that Disraeli, who was then leading the Opposition, had a strong desire that the debate should be kept up throughout the languorous dinner-hour. Some of Disraeli's best men on questions of foreign policy had left the House, not supposing that their services were likely to be needed, and it was necessary that they should be sent for and brought back with as little delay as possible. Disraeli had no one near him on whom he could rely to keep up the talking in the meantime, and when he saw the clever young Irish Member come into the House he thought Hennessy was just the man who could, if he would, effectively fill up the gap. Therefore he sent one of his followers to Hennessy with an earnest request that he would keep the debate going, and with a Blue Book which was thrust hastily into Hennessy's hand. That was all the stock-in-trade my friend Hennessy had to go on with. Looking at the cover of the Blue Book, he saw that it had something to do with the affairs of India, and he tried to glance over a few of its pages while at the same time doing his very best to follow the remarks of the speaker on the Treasury Bench, who was evidently about to bring his speech to a conclusion. Before Hennessy could get any notion of what the discussion was

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all about, the Minister in possession of the House concluded his arguments and resumed his seat. Then Hennessy sprang to his feet, after the manner of one who is bursting with convictions, and with information to sustain his convictions, and he proceeded to address the House. He caught at a few of the concluding words of the previous speaker, those words which declared that the Government courted the fullest investigation into every detail of its foreign policy, and he asked how those words were consistent with the whole tenor of the Right Honourable Gentleman's speech, or with the contents of the Blue Book which he, Hennessy, at that moment held in his hand. Had the Right Honourable Gentleman called the attention of the House to the remarkable passage to be found in one of the earliest of the despatches which that Blue Book contained? He appealed to the Right Honourable Gentleman to favour him with a little of his attention. The Right Honourable Gentleman meanwhile had been chatting with a colleague on the Treasury Bench, and was not listening to a word of the Honourable Member's speech. Now, however, another colleague touched him on the arm and intimated to him that the Honourable Member was making an appeal to his notice, and accordingly he assumed an air of preternatural watchfulness, and put his hand to his ear, as if anxious not to lose a word of the Honourable Member's speech. 'May I direct the Right Honourable Gentleman's attention,' Hennessy asked, 'to a passage in the Blue Book which I am about to read to him, and may I demand of him how he reconciles the statements made in that passage with the declaration which he has just now delivered to the House?' The Right Honourable Gentleman probably did not see what the one thing had to do with the other; but be-

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fore he had time to make up his mind on the subject Hennessy was off on some other page of the Blue Book — and I need not go on with my attempt to reproduce in words the course of Hennessy's enterprise. It is enough to say that he was able to carry on a speech, which seemed connected and coherent enough, until his anxious eyes were relieved by seeing two of the expected Conservative Members enter the House hurriedly, and take their seats on the front Opposition Bench. Then he knew that he had saved the situation, and after wandering airily about the subject for a little while longer he closed with a general denunciation of the whole Indian policy of the Government, and resumed his seat. He was especially complimented by Disraeli later in the evening for the manner in which he had come to the rescue, and for the skill with which he had contrived to make the House believe that he actually knew what he was talking about.

Hennessy performed many a similar feat in later days, and he was, I think, the first practical experimentalist in the policy of obstruction since the struggle over the great Reform Bill. He showed himself capable, however, of something better than mere obstruction. He proposed and carried, in the teeth of Lord Palmerston's Government, a resolution calling for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the expediency of throwing certain Civil Service appointments open to competition. His motion had the support of the late Lord Derby, then Lord Stanley, and Lord Stanley was afterwards appointed Chairman of the Committee, and the labours of the Committee led to a great reform in our Civil Service system. Hennessy was an ardent advocate of the cause of Poland; and was one of the comparatively few members on either side of the House

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who advocated the cause of the North, and predicted its success, during the days of the great American civil war. Of course it was a difficult task for a young man with limited means to maintain himself in Parliament during those days, and though Hennessy had been called to the Bar, he had not given much attention to the Law Courts, and when his friends came into power he found it necessary to accept an appointment as Governor of one of the smaller Colonies. He held several successive appointments, and rose in the service, and became Governor of Hong Kong, and of Mauritius. His colonial career was somewhat chequered, and he came into occasional antagonism with the Colonial Office at home. Until he became Governor of a Colony, the general impression of him, formed in the House of Commons and outside of it, was simply that he was a clever young man who had made up his mind to get on in the world, that he was fighting for his own hand, and that his great ambition in life was to make a good position for himself and to keep it. Some of his old friends thought better of him, because they knew him better. In his career as colonial Governor he took again and again the very course which was least likely to recommend him to the favour of the authorities at home. Again and again he made himself the champion of the interests of the natives, against what he conceived to be the unreasonable claims made in the interests of those whom I may call the planters or settlers. Such a course recommended him no doubt to the sympathy and approval of some of the philanthropists at home, and of the Aborigines' Protection Society which they had founded and sustained. It is needless to say, however, that the philanthropists and Aborigines' Protection Society are not the most powerful patrons a colonial Governor could have

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at home, and Hennessy made for himself many enemies whose opposition was of importance.

I was not much surprised myself at the course he had taken. He was still the old John Hennessy of my early days — intrepid, self-opinionated, delighting in the performance of a public part, but chivalrous at heart, and endowed with a strong sense of right. I have no doubt that during much of his short parliamentary career he felt a positive enjoyment in the character he had created for himself, and it gave him the same sort of pleasure that a rising young actor might feel in the successful development of the part assigned to him on the stage. But I never had any doubt that my old friend's sympathies would always bring him to the side of those whom he conceived to be oppressed, whatever might be the effect on his own personal fortunes. I am not now contending that Hennessy was right in all his colonial policy, I am only expressing my full conviction, that in every course he took which became the subject of public controversy he was influenced by just and honourable and generous motives. I have already said he made himself many enemies during his colonial career, and he came back to this country intending to settle down to a quieter life. He had bought for himself a beautifully situated place near Queenstown, Rostellan Castle, among whose woods he and I and some of our friends had often rambled in the days when we were young, and all the world seemed to be young likewise. He had a romantic admiration for the career of Sir Walter Raleigh, and had become the possessor of the famous historical house in which Raleigh had lived in Youghal, and there Hennessy had settled his mother and sisters. Thus, when he gave up the work of colonial administration he was not without pleasant homes in his native land to

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which he could turn for repose. But Hennessy — he was now Sir John Pope Hennessy — was not the sort of man made for repose.

He and I met in London, after a separation of many years. I had not seen him since the close of his first short parliamentary career in 1865, and we met again, I think, in 1882. I had heard from him now and then during that long interval, and I well remember a superb silken dressing-gown, the choice product of Chinese art, which he sent to me from Hong Kong. During his stay in London in the season of '82 and after, I saw him and his wife almost every day. We had many walks and drives together, and dinners, and visits to the theatre, and long talks over old times and old friends — about this one who was living and that one who was dead; about this one who had made such a success which none of us had ever anticipated for him, and that other about whom we had formed such bright hopes, and who had come to nothing; about this girl who had made such a splendid marriage, and that girl who had refused so many offers, and was now a withered old maid devoted to charitable slumming — and so on, with the same sort of discourse. Sir John and his wife were staying at Claridge's Hotel, and I remember that an address was presented to him there by some of our leading philanthropists, among whom was my old friend Sir Wilfrid Lawson, thanking him for the efforts he had made on behalf of the oppressed natives in some of the places which he had governed. I remember also a pleasant little dinner-party which I gave for him and his wife at the 'Star and Garter' Hotel, Richmond; Cyrus W. Field, the projector of the Atlantic cable (whom I have already mentioned in these pages) was one of the guests, and we had Leonard Courtney, and Lord Ashbourne — then

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Mr. Gibson, Irish Solicitor-General to the Conservative Government — and Madame Modjeska, the famous Polish actress, and her husband, and Frank H. Hill, then editor of the 'Daily News,' and his wife; and many other friends. It was not long before I discovered, during one of his later visits to Europe, that Sir John had by no means made up his mind to pass a life of perfect rest, and that he was not even yet quite cured of his early love for the stir and movement of the House of Commons. What is that mysterious fascination which the life of the House of Commons exercises over those who have once yielded to its glamour? I heard a rude and unpoetical parliamentary colleague liken it to the taste for dram drinking. 'Some fellows never get it,' he said, 'but when it once takes the grip of a man he never quite shakes it off.' I decline altogether to accept this comparison; but I have observed that a man who once takes a liking for the life of the House of Commons is hardly ever able to shake it off and be free again.

I soon found that my friend Pope Hennessy, after all his years of colonial residence, had not yet shaken off the passion of his early manhood, and that he was well inclined to enter the House of Commons again. He still remained an Irish Nationalist, and an Irish Home Ruler, and I could not but think that he would be a most valuable acquisition to our little parliamentary band. It was not difficult to induce Parnell to see the advantage of having such a supporter, and it was soon arranged that Hennessy was to have the first chance whenever a vacancy should come up in an Irish constituency. Things went wrong, however, in a manner sadly unexpected. The Parnell case came on in the Divorce Court, and the result was the temporary break-

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up of the Irish Nationalist Party. I only touch upon that tragic story to mention the fact that the great majority of the Irish Party rallied under a newly chosen leader, and that Parnell led a very small minority. Hennessy agreed to stand for the city of Kilkenny, as an opponent of the Parnellite candidate, and was elected. Thus it happened that, after many years of separation, Hennessy and I became comrades once again, for he entered the House of Commons as a member of that Irish National Party which had chosen me for its leader. In all our early rambles about Cork, and our evenings in our debating society, and our pulls on the river, we had never anticipated a companionship such as that which the Fates were preparing for us. I have a keen recollection of the days and nights we spent together during the progress of the Kilkenny election, of Hennessy's indomitable good spirits and never-failing good temper, of the sunny buoyancy of mind which enabled him to treat passing troubles as a jest, and the flow of humorous anecdote and comment which kept us all alive during the most trying hours of a contest, where the political comrades of yesterday were the political enemies of to-day. Hennessy had always been a man of singularly abstemious habits; his only real revelry in the pleasures of the table consisted in his love for fruit, and wine was to him rather a conventional ornament of the feast than a delight or a stimulant to the palate. Some of our flippant colleagues were inclined occasionally to make fun of the Irish politician whose favourite idea of a midnight revel seemed to be represented by a glass of milk. Hennessy gave back joke for joke, and could hold his own in wit and humour with the merriest votary of 'the foaming grape of eastern France,' as Tennyson has christened champagne. During that

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Kilkenny election we used to notice of nights that the two brightest talkers among our little band were Thomas Sexton, who never tasted any wine, and Hennessy, who only tasted it now and then as a ceremonial, and then forgot all about it. Hennessy had a rare gift of story telling. The 'cistern of his memory' was full of all the drolleries and odd experiences stored up during his wanderings in so many climates; and if it were possible for him to tell a dull story—a possibility I could not admit—he would most assuredly have made it seem bright by his manner of recounting it. He was elected for Kilkenny, as I have said, and he served the cause loyally and faithfully as a member of the House of Commons.

I was reading not long since the life of a great Catholic Prelate whose biographer had strong leanings towards the Conservative Party, and I noticed with amazement and also with amusement that the biographer held up Sir John Pope Hennessy as a model and a contrast to all Irish Catholics and Nationalists of a more recent time, and insisted that Hennessy, when in Parliament, had never mixed himself up with any of the Separatist and disorderly projects which Irish Members in later days had allowed themselves to countenance and support. I can fancy how Hennessy would have been amused if he could have lived to read this account of himself, and what droll comments it would have delighted him to make upon it. As a matter of fact, during Hennessy's first occupancy of a seat in the House of Commons, he had always proclaimed himself a Nationalist, and he and the O'Donoghue went ahead of any of their Irish colleagues in supporting an agitation in favour of Home Rule, although the movement had not at that time received the name by which it has more

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lately been known. I have already shown that when Hennessy entered Parliament for the second time he entered it as an avowed and resolute Home Ruler, and would indeed have been greatly surprised to hear that anyone could have supposed him likely to enter under any other conditions. He must of course have found the House of Commons greatly changed since his early experience of it; Disraeli, the hero of his youthful days, was gone, and the brilliant band of Irishmen who had served under Disraeli — the Whitesides, and Seymour-Fitzgeralds, and the Cairnses, had gone also; and John Bright was but a memory, and the rasping jests of Bernal Osborne were heard no more. Hennessy, however, took in kindly fashion to the House of Commons as he found it under altered conditions, and though he spoke but rarely, when he did speak he had all his old fluency, his easy precision of language, and his mastery of details. The old friendship between him and me had merely come back under new conditions. We saw each other as often as we used to do in the dear old days at Cork. We remained friends to the last. The same newspapers that told the world of the death of Parnell told on the same day of John Pope Hennessy's death.

CHAPTER XXXII

IN THE LOBBY

THE reader will hardly need to be told that, when I ask him to take his stand in the Lobby, I mean the Inner Lobby of the House of Commons, the Lobby into which the Debating Chamber itself opens, and through which access is to be had to the Peers' Gallery and the Galleries for Ambassadors and for Distinguished Strangers. From the Peers' Gallery the Prince of Wales often looks down upon the House, and in that Peers' Gallery sat the late Prince Consort on the memorable occasion when his presence was absurdly regarded and resented by some of the hot-headed Tories as an effort made to intimidate the House of Commons into a servile acceptance of Sir Robert Peel's nefarious scheme for the abolition of the duties on corn. On any occasion of remarkable interest the Lobby has nearly as many Peers as Commoners passing through it, and the privileged members of the Press whose names are on the list held by the Sergeant-at-Arms are free to go out and come in as they please, and to interview Members who are not unwilling to be interviewed; and constituents who wish to see their representatives, and who are provided with what is called a 'pink ticket,' help to swell the crowd.

I do not know that there is a more interesting spot in London for an intelligent and thoughtful observer than

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the Lobby of the House of Commons. In my earlier days it used to be free to all comers. Any stranger had only to say, if questioned by a policeman in the Outer Lobby, that he wished to speak to a Member of the House, and he was allowed to pass in without further check. During those years the Lobby was hardly ever crowded to inconvenience. It is the common characteristic of our human nature that we seldom care to go where we are perfectly free to go. The moment a process of selection is instituted, and admission becomes a sort of privilege or mark of distinction, then we are all filled with a burning desire to make our way in. Therefore, when, many years ago, it was thought desirable to put some restriction on the admission of strangers, a rush for the Lobby began which has been going on ever since. More lately still, after the attempt was made to blow up the Houses of Parliament, yet further restrictions on the admission of strangers were imposed, and the ancient privilege enjoyed by members of giving in their own name orders for admission of persons to the Strangers' Gallery was abolished. For the further protection of the House against dynamite conspirators it was decreed that no strangers, admitted under whatever sanction to the Lobby, must be allowed to remain unless while there their honourable intentions were guaranteed by the companionship of a Member of the House. I have heard it positively affirmed that on the day when this latter regulation came into existence its first two victims were Cardinal Manning and the Editor of the 'Times.' It would be needless to inform the experienced student of human nature that the immediate result of all these restrictions was to make the Lobby of the House more crowded than it had ever been before.

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My intention at present is to deal rather with reminiscences of the Lobby as it was than with the Lobby as it may be seen during the present session. My experiences of it began to be regular and frequent in the session of 1860, and I had casual experience of its ways and company in even more distant years. In the Lobby I was first introduced to Lord Palmerston, and had the only conversation with him which it was ever my good luck to have. I remember his telling me in the course of that talk that he was able to stand the almost incessant wear and tear of work because he was lucky enough never to have to take his work to bed with him. He went on to explain exactly what he meant, and he told us that he had long accustomed himself never to think of his work when the happy hour came which enabled him to give sleep its chance. No matter, he said, how important, how momentous might be the work which had engaged his day, no matter how fraught with profoundest interest might be the course which he had made up his mind to pursue, he could put it all aside and clean out of his head when he got to his own home and was prepared to take his rest. Nothing could be more easy, affable, and pleasant than the manner of Lord Palmerston in the Lobby. He had a smile, a shake of the hand, and a cheery word for everybody. He never seemed put out by anything. Nothing appeared to be an interruption to him, and, so far as the outer observer could judge, nobody ever bored him. He must have been accosted again and again by persons whom he did not know from Adam, by persons whom, if he had ever known them, he had utterly forgotten; and there was always the same beaming smile, the same glance of friendly welcome, the same ready outstretched hand. I have often stood and watched him with the keenest

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interest, wondering whether he was really glad to see all the people who came up to him, and never was I able to detect any expression of weariness on those animated and mobile features.

Another man to whom I had the good fortune to be introduced in the Lobby was Sir George Cornwall Lewis. I felt very proud of the introduction, because I had, and still have, a profound admiration for the intellect and the attainments of Sir George Lewis. But with all my admiration for his mental capacity, I think I was at the time especially impressed by the texture and the colours of his waistcoat. I wonder whether it would be possible to obtain such a waistcoat now, and whether, if it were obtained, any man would have the insensate heroism to wear it? Yet Sir George Lewis's waistcoat, although it was not regarded then as an article up to the latest fashion, was not looked upon with anything approaching consternation. It was a plaid waistcoat constructed out of worsted, and bearing all the appearance of having been wrought by the cunning hand of some fair being belonging to the wearer's family. Its squares were of red and green, and blue and yellow; and it presented a decidedly cheerful appearance, which contrasted somewhat oddly with the grave and even melancholy aspect of the statesman who wore it. Sir George did not seem to be in the least conscious that there was anything out of date in the material and the fashion of his waistcoat. Yet it must have been a little out of date, even then, for I remember that the sight of it carried my memory back to somewhat earlier days when, in a provincial town, I had myself worn a waistcoat of somewhat similar material and pattern, presented to me as a gift, and wrought for me by the dexterous hands of a kindly spinster aunt. The

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correspondents for the newspapers who frequented the Lobby in those distant days do not seem to have been nearly so free and frank in their personal descriptions of distinguished statesmen as they are at the present time, for I do not remember any word-pictures of Sir George Lewis's get-up finding their way into the columns of the daily or the weekly journals.

In curious contrast, in this way, to the attire of Sir George Lewis was that of Richard Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton. Monckton Milnes was always dressed according to the latest fashion; his hat and his coat, his gloves and his boots must have been the study of many an admiring and envying eye. But although other men might have got their clothes from the same makers as Monckton Milnes did, very few other men could have worn them with the ease and the grace which belonged of right to him. Milnes was very handsome, and had an easy, courtly manner, which charmed everyone who came within his range. I made his acquaintance, I think, for the first time in the Lobby of the House of Commons, and the acquaintance was kept up until his death. He always impressed me as a man who might have gone much farther and higher in politics and in statesmanship than he did, if he had only taken the trouble. He had strong convictions, he had great literary gifts, he wrote some poems which will always be remembered, he had an exquisite artistic taste, and he had read and appreciated more books in more languages than almost any other public man of his time. Perhaps he had too many tastes, too much culture, too much mere enjoyment of politics and literature, and art and life — too much, in short, of the amateur in his temperament to allow him to work patiently along the one track by which individual success is most often

to be attained. He was an admirable speaker, when he took the trouble to make a speech, and he certainly was one of the most graceful, charming, imaginative, and eloquent after-dinner speakers I have ever heard. In truth I think Nature and Fortune had done too much for him, and made life all too pleasant, to leave with him that strong personal ambition which will put up with any fatigue for the sake of a distinct success. His hospitality was most generous and gracious. His dinner-parties were delightful at the time, and delightful to look back upon in memory. He was a charming talker, but he never talked one down; he had a wonderful stock of appropriate anecdotes, but he never seemed to make it a part of his business to tell stories; and I do not believe anyone ever heard him tell the same story twice. How kind he was to rising young authors and painters, and sculptors and actors, everyone must know who has had anything to do with letters or art in our time. He had a keen wit and a rich humour, and he had the art of giving, when occasion arose, the soundest advice in the most amusing words. I remember that in one of my earliest speeches in the House of Commons I ventured to give point to some lesson which I was endeavouring to impress upon the House by a line or two quoted from the second part of 'Faust.' Let not the reader think too badly of my audacity and my literary display; I did not quote the words in the language of Goethe, but only gave their meaning in an extemporaneous rendering of my own. Next day I received a letter of playful remonstrance and rebuke from Lord Houghton. He warned me in his own humorous way that if I really meant to get on in the House of Commons, or even to stand well with it, I positively must not endeavour to get the House to accompany me on

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excursions into the second part of 'Faust.' With the first part he cheerfully admitted something might possibly be done: most Members had seen Gounod's Opera, and might therefore put up with a passing allusion to something in the drama; but to expect men to endure any citation from the second part was to ask too much of average respectability. Lord Houghton set off his good advice with so many happy and humorous turns of expression that I felt quite proud of having received such a letter; and I need hardly say that I never again intruded on the House of Commons even the slightest reference to the second part of 'Faust.'

I never knew a man more anxious to give pleasure to his guests than was Lord Houghton. One day I had an invitation to a luncheon party at his house, to meet the new French Ambassador to St. James's, M. Waddington, who, as everybody knows, was an Englishman by birth and education, but had settled in France and risen to high political position there. There was then some subject occupying my mind about which I particularly wished to have some words of counsel from Lord Houghton, and I therefore purposely went to his house a little before the appointed hour. I found Lord Houghton stretched on the sofa with one of his arms bandaged, and he told me that he had had a bad accident that morning, but that he was determined not to put off his guests, and he begged of me not to make any allusion to the accident, or at all events not to treat it as anything serious, so unwilling was he to be the cause of any discomfort to his company. I gave my promise, of course, and in due time the guests arrived. Lord Houghton made very light of the accident, merely mentioning, in the most careless manner, that he had hurt his arm, and thought it better to have it bandaged, and

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I never saw him in brighter spirits as a host. I walked to the House of Commons with John Morley, who was one of Lord Houghton's guests, and I told him that I believed the accident was serious, and we both marvelled at the nerve, and courage, and self-mastery which had enabled Lord Houghton to play the part of a joyous host while suffering from what we felt sure was intense physical pain. Afterwards I learned that the accident was even more serious than I had been led to suppose, and that it called for long surgical treatment, and I could not but admire the pluck and courage with which a man of Lord Houghton's years had gone through so much bodily suffering, and shown no outward sign of distress, rather than put off his luncheon or allow any shadow of gloom to fall upon his assembled guests. I have often fancied that Lord Houghton ought to have been a patron of letters and art in the days of Horace. I am sure he would have played his part to perfection, enjoyed all the companionship it brought him, and the opportunities it gave him of helping young men of genius on their way to fame, and would have exchanged bright thoughts and words with these same young men of genius which would have proved him worthy to be of their set. But I have sometimes thought, too, that as the Destinies did not create Lord Houghton in time to be a patron of Augustan art and letters, it was a pity he did not devote himself to some one path of our modern life and concentrate all his vision on it, and so find his way to a greater and more lasting success.

Disraeli was rarely seen in the Lobby of the House of Commons in the days when I was beginning to be familiar with that charmed enclosure. Still more rarely was he seen talking or loitering there. Gladstone was not at any time, that I can remember, to be seen often

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in the Lobby. The late Lord Derby, even after he had ceased to be a Member of the House of Commons, was often there. Cardinal Manning was at one time a frequent visitor, indeed might be found almost every evening with a little circle of Irish Members gathered around him who had intercepted him, perhaps, on his way into one of the galleries. I never saw Lord Salisbury pass through the Lobby without a feeling of regret that the accident of birth or the accident of death should have withdrawn him from the thrilling debates of the House of Commons, and sent him across to the Chamber at the other end of the building, only to return now and then and become a silent looker-on from the Peers' Gallery of the House of Commons. As I hardly ever happened to be in agreement with any of Lord Salisbury's political opinions, I ought, perhaps, to have been glad that he was put out of the way of doing any harm in that Representative Assembly, which is sooner or later the ruler of the country. Still I was always sorry that the House of Commons should lose the presence of such a man as Lord Salisbury. He was one of the most conspicuous, and, in the true sense, one of the most interesting figures in the House. He was a debater of all but the very highest order, and on great occasions he seemed to become an orator. His style was always forcible, telling, and original. He never sank into the conventional manner, the monotonous mechanical rise and fall of intonation, by which so many speeches in the House of Commons are spoilt and made wearisome. With him the unforeseen almost always came to pass.

There are many good speakers in the House of Commons — fairly good speakers, that is, as parliamentary eloquence goes — who never begin a sentence without

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giving you good reason for anticipating in what manner the sentence is to end. No such depressing confidence could ever be felt when Lord Salisbury spoke. One never could tell what he was going to say next. He spoke with all the literary excellence of a man who has been trained to write as well as to speak, while, on the other hand, he had the instinct of a born debater, and never delivered a written essay, or smoothly talked a leading article. He hit out sharply, and sometimes fiercely; but the House always relished his hard hitting, and when the battle of words was over he was frank and friendly with his bitterest political opponents. I could never help feeling, as a Member of the House of Commons, that Lord Salisbury was rather thrown away upon the House of Lords. It has somehow seemed to me that when once the days of Brougham, and Lyndhurst, and the more famous Lord Derby were gone, the model orator of the House of Lords ought to be a man like the Duke of Argyll, capable of delivering an elaborate, fluent, rhetorical oration; a symmetrical academic harangue; such as a French Academician could readily be induced to accept as the best illustration of the school of eloquence that befits the House of Lords. But I have always thought Lord Salisbury too vigorous, too vehement, too original, too surprising in his sudden turns of phrase, too obviously unpremeditated in his happiest illustrations, to suit the dignified dead level of the Hereditary Chamber.

One of the most familiar figures in the Lobby some years ago, now I suppose hardly ever seen there, was that of Joseph Cowen — Joe Cowen, as he was familiarly called. I think every one misses Joe Cowen from the House of Commons. Personal enemies he could have had none, and his political enemies admired, as

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warmly as his political friends could do, his genuine eloquence. No one who heard him deliver his first great speech in the House of Commons — it was during the debate on the Empress of India Bill — is ever likely to forget the sensation it created. As Mr. Gathorne Hardy observed during the debate, it electrified the House. It came with all the greater novelty on the ears of the listeners because it was what might fairly and not carpingly be called an old-fashioned order of speech. It seemed to belong to the days when the House was still familiar with what used to be described as ‘flights of oratory.’ It was the kind of speech that might have been made when the House was still under the influence of Canning, and Richard Lalor Sheil. Those who had the good fortune to hear the lofty and impassioned eloquence of the later Lord Ellenborough would have greeted a sudden revival of the same kind of parliamentary speaking in the appeal made by Mr. Cowen to the intellect and the heart of the House of Commons. The obvious sincerity of the orator, the occasional tremulousness of his voice, only lent a new charm to the speech by impressing the hearers with the conviction that the whole soul of the man was in his argument. Up to that time Cowen had seldom spoken in the House; had never, I think, attempted anything like a long speech. From that hour he was recognised on all sides as one of the few of our living orators. There was something winning and even captivating in his very appearance and manner. He was known to be a man of ample means, yet his dress was little different from that of an ordinary working man. He had a strong Northumbrian accent, which, I believe, at first puzzled Disraeli, but which, as the speech went on, seemed to lend a new effect to its directness, its sim-

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plicity, its depth of emotion, and its almost poetical style of eloquence. Cowen spoke but seldom in the House, and whenever he spoke, after that remarkable debate; he thoroughly maintained the high position which he had so suddenly made for himself. Cowen was more of an orator in the old-fashioned and literary sense of the word than any other Member of the House of Commons in our more recent time. Even with Bright, even with Gladstone, the best speeches were, above all else, business speeches — speeches directed to the practical work of persuading and convincing the House; and therefore, no matter how exquisite in style, noble in thought, and persuasive in argument, were yet addressed to the level of the average common-sense, and delivered in the language that came home to the ordinary intelligence of the listeners. Cowen shot his arrow so high into the air that there was a certain doubt in the minds of his listeners whether he had not shot it too high, and whether, like the arrow of Virgil's hero, it might not miss its mark altogether and leave only a line of soon-vanishing light behind it. But, although Cowen's speeches were undoubtedly pitched in somewhat too lofty a key for the ears of a House long habituated to a less exalted and impassioned style of utterance, they did not fail to hit their mark, or at least fail to make a deep impression on the House and on the country. Had Cowen been an ambitious man, or had he been formed by Nature to be a serviceable Party man, he would undoubtedly have taken a high place in some Liberal Administration. But Cowen was emphatically not a Party man. He was emotional, he was sensitive, he was filled with an almost fierce spirit of independence. He would not follow any leader one step along any path farther than his full convictions and his whole

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conscience would allow him to go. The essence of politics is compromise, says Macaulay; Cowen's temper and principles would not readily recognise the necessity for compromise. An American friend of his and mine once said to me : ' Joe Cowen is a sublime sort of crank.' Allowing for his rough way of putting things, my American friend's description was not altogether unfair, and was certainly not meant to be unfriendly. Cowen was indeed, in some ways, a sublime sort of crank. He was one of the most generous of men, and he had the generous man's quixotic inclination to take up, when he could, the championship of the weaker side. Everyone who knew him admired his noble nature, and if it had to be admitted that he was not the sort of man to get on in political life, it had also to be admitted that he did not want to get on in that sort of way. He had gone into politics to champion his own principles and his own views, and not to make himself indispensable to any set or party. Cowen was, I believe, the very first man who ventured on the daring innovation of wearing a soft, low-crowned felt hat in the House of Commons. Some people fancied that this was done out of a sort of democratic affectation of indifference or contempt for the conventionalities of parliamentary life, as symbolised by the tall, hard, and shiny hat. But there was absolutely no affectation about Joe Cowen, and he only wore the soft and broad-brimmed felt hat because he was liable to headaches and weakness of the eyes, and the stiff narrow brim of the conventional parliamentary headpiece would have been a trouble to him. I should say, too, that before he startled old-fashioned Members by presenting himself with this unwonted head covering, he had quietly consulted with the Speaker of the House and obtained his formal sanction for the innovation. Since

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that time we have outgrown some of our old-fashioned and formal ways, and the soft, low-crowned felt hat is a familiar sight on the benches of the House and in the Division Lobbies. Working men's representatives have found their way into the House, and have been seen even on the Treasury Bench, and it is a comfort to think that the low-crowned hat does not seem to have concealed any treason to the British Constitution.

There was a time when the figure of Charles Newdegate was familiar to everyone who visited the Lobby. Newdegate was the type of a class of men that has now faded almost altogether from public life. I do not know how I could better describe him than by saying that he represented the No Popery theory. With Newdegate the duty of the true Englishman was beyond everything else to resist the encroachments, and to detect and to defy the emissaries of the Church of Rome. He was a steady Conservative in politics, and he followed his leaders loyally when they would lead; but there were fields of enterprise into which they would not always lead, and then Newdegate had to become a leader for himself, and it not uncommonly happened that when he rose to lead the way, nobody followed, and he went along undismayed. He was often a solitary watcher on the tower straining his eyes to discover some new and treacherous advance of Popery, and it happened, only too often, that when he gave warning to the defenders of the tower the warning was given in vain. Even those who had command of the garrison would not listen, or did not believe, or did not care; and the one man who saw the danger might as well have shut his eyes for all the good that was done by his keenness of vision. Poor Newdegate had fallen upon an age that was at once too practical, too busy, and too sceptical,

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to believe in prophetic vision. His Conservative colleagues had their minds occupied, for the most part, with things that seemed to them of more immediate concern than the doings of the Church of Rome. Their minds were taken up with the consideration of the best methods for resisting Gladstone's new-fangled financial projects; for preventing Cobden from entering into commercial alliances with the Emperor of the French; for preventing Bright from bringing about a reduction of the Franchise. They could not be got to interest themselves in the machinations of the Jesuits and the projects of the Pope. As to Mr. Disraeli, Newdegate soon found that he could not place any possible reliance on such a leader. Why, during the troubles of 1860, Disraeli had positively stood up for the security of the Pope's temporal throne, as a guarantee against Italian revolution, when Newdegate was made aware, on the most trustworthy information, that the Pope and the Italian Revolution were secretly working hand in hand for the upset of the Protestant Church, and the establishment of Popery as the State religion in England. When the Tories were in office there was not — will it be believed? — one single man on the Treasury Bench who gave his full sympathy to the great purpose of Newdegate's political life! When the Tories were out of office Newdegate found just the same want of sympathy among the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench! There was, therefore, nothing left for him to do but to stick to his annual motion for a periodical inspection, under State authority, of all the Nunneries and Convents in Great Britain and Ireland. Even this annual motion found but a feeble and half-hearted support from Newdegate's Conservative colleagues.

The more responsible members of the party intimated

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plainly enough that they considered the annual motion a bore, and some of the younger Tories sneered at it and made jokes about it. Newdegate was in many ways a fine type of the English country gentleman. He had a stately presence, he was a splendid rider; his horsemanship won the admiration of no less competent an authority than Rarey, the famous American horse-tamer, who once paid a long visit to England. Newdegate was a man of education, according to the old-fashioned system of the Universities of his younger days; he had courteous manners, and was on friendly terms with all those around him, no matter what their opinions might be on the great No Popery question. I sat for a long time on the Bench just below his in the House of Commons, and he actually did me the favour, on one remarkable occasion, to support a motion of mine with regard to one of the Clauses of an Irish Land Tenure Bill. I had many pleasant talks with him, although he knew that I was a Radical, so far as English politics were concerned, a Nationalist and Home Ruler as an Irish representative, and, worse, a member of that Church which it was the main purpose of his life to resist and to denounce. The fates dealt oddly with him on one occasion at least. He was in sinking health during his later years, and his constitution could no longer stand the strain imposed upon it by his scrupulously regular attendance. One night, while he was sitting in his accustomed place, he suddenly fainted, and the first man to support him in his arms and undo his necktie was an Irish Nationalist Member and Ultramontane disciple of the Church of Rome. I think the Catholic Members of the House of Commons all liked and respected Newdegate, notwithstanding his uncompromising hostility to their Church. Nobody could doubt his sincerity, and

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there was something positively touching in the patience with which he maintained himself against the cold-shoulder which even his own party habitually turned towards his No Popery enterprises. In the Lobby he met with another of the fainting-fits which gave warning of his coming end. He was leaning against a marble counter which then stood there, when he suddenly fainted, and in his fall his head struck against the cold stone, and he was severely hurt. The House in general felt that his disappearance from it was a loss. His was a peculiar and characteristic figure, and the House grows into a kind of affection for familiar oddities.

I can well remember, although I was not in the House in those days, his old colleague or rival, I am not certain which I ought to call him, in the No Popery enterprise, Mr. Spooner. Spooner had for his chief business in life an annual motion against the Maynooth Grant, which he almost always addressed to an empty House, although he generally had friends on the premises to rush in to the rescue if a count should be moved, and the Speaker should ring his warning bell. But the friends, of course, did not want to hear poor old Spooner's speech, and usually made his rising a signal for retreat to the dining-rooms. During his later years Spooner's sight became impaired, and he was allowed the privilege of a pair of candles set beside him, in order that he might see his way to all the accusations which he had noted down against the teachings of Maynooth. Later than Spooner's time Mr. Newdegate had to bear with a sort of rivalry or co-operation on the part of Mr. Whalley. There was more of the eccentric about Whalley than about Spooner or Newdegate, and the House was disposed to chaff him a good deal. One night, when the Conservatives were in office, Whalley put a long

question to Disraeli, demanding to know whether the Government had received any recent information with regard to certain machinations of the Jesuits against the security of the Established Church in England, and whether the Government were taking any steps to resist those insidious enterprises. Disraeli arose, and leaning on the table in front of him, began, with a manner of portentous gravity and a countenance of almost funereal gloom, to give his answer. ‘Her Majesty’s Ministers,’ he said, ‘had not been informed of any absolutely new machinations of the Jesuits, but they would continue to watch, as they had hitherto watched, for any indication of such insidious enterprises. One of the favourite machinations of the Jesuits,’ he went on to say, with deepening solemnity, ‘had always been understood to be a plan for sending into this country disguised emissaries of their own, who, by expressing extravagant and ridiculous alarm about Jesuit plots, might bring public derision on the efforts of the genuine supporters of the State Church. He would not venture to say whether the Honourable Member had knowledge of any such plans as that —’; but here a roar of laughter from the whole House rendered further explanation impossible, and Disraeli composedly resumed his seat.

Whalley had a peculiar way before beginning a speech, which I often noticed with curiosity and wonder. Just before rising from his seat he always tapped three times on the back of the bench in front of him. Never, so far as I know, did he get up to address the House without this preliminary ceremonial. Was there anything magical in it? Was it supposed to avert evil omens? Or to invite success? If there was magic in it, it must have been white magic, for Whalley was far too good a fellow to have anything to do with the Black Art. Was

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it intended as a spell against the machinations of the Jesuits, who might, for aught one could tell, have been working secret charms to reduce the dreaded orator to silence, just at the moment when he was about to confound their plots by the thunder of his eloquence? I do not know, I can only state the fact without attempting any explanation. I have often wished I had asked Mr. Whalley himself to tell me what he intended by this mystic performance, for he was friendly and without guile, and would not, I think, have hesitated to confide in me. I always put off the inquiry, however, with the vague purpose of asking the question next time, and the next time never came. I can only offer the problem now as one well worthy the consideration of Mr. Andrew Lang, who takes a loving and expert interest in such subjects.

So far as I can judge the No Popery champions have all disappeared from the House of Commons. They never flourished much in the House of Lords, for the House of Lords is not given to long sittings, is as eager to get done with work and be off to play as a band of school-boys, and cannot be induced to devote whole nights to the discussion of abstract resolutions. I have not heard lately of any successor in the representative Chamber to the parts so patiently and painfully played by Spooner, Newdegate, and Whalley. John Arthur Roebuck was a very different sort of man indeed from Newdegate, Spooner, or Whalley. He was a man of genuine and original ability, but during all his later years almost as peculiar and independent as any of the mystic three. Roebuck was one of the men often to be seen in the Lobby, and, indeed, I think, for all his appearance of cynicism and raspingness, he rather liked to be accosted there and drawn into talk even by stran-

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gers. He passed for being a most unsympathetic man, but I must say for myself that I always found him friendly and genial, although there was little in common between us so far as political opinions were concerned. He used to be classed with the philosophical Radicals, but certainly in the days when I knew him, and was able to observe his career in the House of Commons, there was little of the philosophical, and still less of the Radical, about him. I cannot imagine how he could have got on politically with Grote, and Mill, and Molesworth, although, personally, he was a great friend of Mill's; but, then, he certainly did not get on with Bright and Gladstone, although he classed himself as a Liberal to the end. No man was listened to with more attention in the House of Commons, for, although he had no claim to the higher qualities of oratory, he always spoke in a clear, cutting style, that chipped its way into the attention of the listener, and kept him constantly on the watch, as one might watch the movement of a sculptor's chisel. Somebody described Roebuck's action while speaking as digital, because he was always stabbing with his right forefinger at some enemy on the Treasury Bench or the Front Opposition Bench. Again, I have heard his utterance likened to that of a transpontine hissing villain, because Roebuck got into the habit of hissing out his threats and denunciations and prophecies of evil, just as our old friend the villain of melodrama used to be in the way of doing, while yet he trod the boards. We all remember that Disraeli once described Roebuck as adopting in one of his speeches the manners and gestures of a twopenny tryant of a Surrey melodrama. All this, however, only made Roebuck the more peculiarly an interesting figure in parliamentary debate. He was a thoroughly sincere man, and

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was, I believe, honestly convinced that he alone possessed the wisdom which could, at all times and at every imaginable crisis, dictate to England her sole course of safety. Furthermore, he had the advantage, as a telling debater, that he never troubled his mind for a moment with any effort to maintain any appearance of consistency. If it occurred to him to-day to give his advice in direct opposition to the opinions which he had expressed yesterday, he acted on the inspiration of the moment, and went ahead accordingly. If a man is confident that he speaks with the voice of an oracle, then of course he must always feel that he is in the right whatever he says, and he need not distress himself in the least by any consideration as to whether the utterances of to-day are in harmony with the utterances of yesterday. Some of our greatest statesmen and parliamentary orators have occasionally tried the patience of the House by an elaborate endeavour to show that there is really nothing inconsistent in what appears, to ordinary minds, an absolute contradiction of views and counsels. Roebuck never marred the effect of any of his clear, crisp, penetrating speeches by such an attempt. His only idea in every speech appeared to be to puncture the House with the particular advice which at the moment he desired to give. The majority of Members, not attaching too grave an importance to his advice at any time, listened to the speech for its own sake, valued it for its short, sharp sentences, and enjoyed it all the more because the Roebuck of to-day wasted no words in trying to reconcile himself with the Roebuck of yesterday. The eloquence was not unadorned, in the sense in which Sir Robert Peel applied the epithet to the eloquence of Richard Cobden; it did not come forth, that is to say, in a mere stream of persuasive or con-

vincing argument, and it was adorned by many incisive phrases, and a profusion of personalities and sarcasm; but it certainly was unadorned by flowers of rhetoric or by flourishes of self-vindication. The House very soon came to know that any speech from Roebuck would be worth listening to, and nobody would have felt in the least disappointed even if it proved that the speech was not worth anything more. Roebuck never led a party, and never, I imagine, made the slightest effort to lead one. A man endowed with so much genuine ability might well have been expected to yield to the temptings of natural ambition, but it always seemed to me that Roebuck's consciousness of his own ability was enough for him, and that he needed no other satisfaction. The true poet, according to one of Goethe's ballads, sings but as the song-bird sings, and the song itself is his sufficient guerdon. I have sometimes been inclined to think that Roebuck was in this way endowed with something of the happy faculty fancifully ascribed to the true poet. To make a clever speech was its own reward for him. He did not ask himself whether it influenced the vote of the House, or whether it opened for him the way to the Treasury Bench. So far as I know, there is not in the House of Commons at present any speaker who could be properly compared with Roebuck. His speeches were as peculiar, in their own quite different way, as the speeches of Joseph Cowen. Cowen spoke in a language of a day more impassioned and poetical than ours; Roebuck dictated in the tones of an oracle. Personally I had a great regard for Roebuck, and always much enjoyed the chance of a talk with him. He had a highly cultivated mind, and was a lover of art as well as of letters. He was often to be met at one of the opening days of the great picture exhibitions, and it

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was always interesting and instructive to listen to his fearless and original comments and criticism. My own special delight, however, was to listen, whenever I had the chance, to his recollections of the great debates and the great debaters of his early parliamentary days. He had a happy power of appreciation, which did not seem to be weakened or distorted in any way by political or personal antagonisms. I shall never forget a rapid and vivid description which he gave me once of O'Connell's peculiar qualities as a debater, and the manner in which he was able to impress an assembly, not merely unfriendly, but positively hostile. On one of the last occasions when I happened to talk with Roebuck, a friend came up and asked him whether he was not feeling well. 'I am suffering,' Roebuck replied, 'from the worst of all maladies, the malady of old age; the one malady I suppose which is absolutely incurable.' The end came not long after.

One of my earliest parliamentary friends was James Stansfeld, and him, too, I met for the first time in the Lobby of the House of Commons many years before I became a Member of Parliament. Stansfeld, like Joseph Cowen, was master of a style of eloquence which hardly seems to belong to our day. When he made his first speech in the House he received a high tribute of praise from Disraeli, who, to do him justice, was always ready to recognise eloquence in a new comer, whether the new comer belonged to his own side of the political field or the other. Stansfeld was one of the earliest and most generous of the English enthusiasts for the cause of united Italy; and indeed he was an enthusiast in favour of the claims for national liberty in every land. His friendship for Mazzini exposed him, in the House of Commons, to the preposterous accusation of having

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favoured schemes for the murder of unpopular sovereigns. The clamour raised against him by this absurd charge was so great that Stansfeld thought himself bound to relieve Lord Palmerston from any difficulty by resigning the office which he then held in the Liberal Administration.

One incident in the debate is not likely to be forgotten, for it led to Disraeli committing one of the most extraordinary freaks of his lifetime. John Bright, in defending Stansfeld, went into a sort of defence of Mazzini also, and sternly condemned the practice of founding charges against public men on the strength of some hasty words let fall by them in the hot youth of their early public career. Then he referred to Disraeli's early heroic poem, or extravaganza, called 'The Revolutionary Epick,' dwelt upon the fact that Disraeli in that poem had introduced two or three lines justifying tyrannicide, and asked whether anyone would now think of denouncing the Right Hon. Gentleman as a champion of political assassination on the strength of that youthful effusion. Disraeli rose, and interrupting the speaker, denied that he had used any words in the poem which could be held to favour such a doctrine. Bright immediately said he was glad he had been misinformed on the subject, and at once withdrew, with generous apology, the statement he had made. So far so good. But Disraeli was not satisfied. He published immediately afterwards a new and authorised version of the 'Revolutionary Epick,' which he dedicated to Lord Stanley, as he then was, afterwards the Lord Derby of our own times, for the purpose of proving that no such lines as those referred to by Bright were to be found in the poem. Sure enough, the new edition contained no such lines. But then the whole story did not quite end there.

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Some malignant person took the trouble of referring to the only available copy of the poem then to be got at, the copy deposited in the British Museum, and in that copy, lo and behold! were to be found the very lines referred to by Bright, which Disraeli had conveniently struck out of the later edition, the edition published in order to prove that no such words had ever been written by the author. The rediscovered passage was published in 'The Morning Star,' and created first an immense sensation, and then an outburst of universal laughter. The whole incident would have severely damaged the reputation of any other statesman than Mr. Disraeli — but somehow the public did not take Disraeli quite seriously; regarded the whole transaction only as one other of Disraeli's clever devices, and allowed him to go his way unrebuked.

Stansfeld returned to office in one of Gladstone's administrations, and rose steadily in the estimation of the House and the country. He had won his reputation, in the first instance, merely as a brilliant orator, but he soon acquired a new reputation as one of the most careful and painstaking administrators ever found in the public service of the country. Stansfeld, however, always kept to certain ideas of his own, and sometimes, I am afraid, embarrassed his chiefs by identifying himself with movements which, however honourable and creditable in themselves, had not been stamped with the approval of the leaders on either side of the House of Commons. Stansfeld was in this way rather an inconvenient man sometimes to the official chiefs of a party. He was, above all things, a man of principle, and would not make of himself a regular partisan, and he would not allow certain questions to remain in abeyance until the time should come when they might be pressed for-

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ward without any disturbance to the political arrangements of the party in power. I am afraid that he, and his friends as well as he, were led to the opinion at a later time that his claims were passed over when a new Liberal Ministry came to be constructed. I do not believe that Stansfeld himself had the least desire to be retained in office, and, indeed, I have never known a public man more thoroughly free from personal ambition or from any feelings of a purely selfish nature. Every Liberal Ministry, every Ministry, Liberal or Conservative, could always count on his support for any measure which commended itself to his principles and public sympathies. He had nothing in him of that personal feeling which apparently has impelled so many men to make themselves troublesome to the leaders of the party by whom they believed themselves to have been passed over when new Ministerial arrangements came to be made. My friendship with Stansfeld continued until his death. The last letter I ever received from him was dated January 9, 1898. In that letter he told me he had been ill since the end of August, but that his doctors assured him that, with care, he might be quite well again by the late spring or early summer. 'Could you come down here,' he asked, 'for a few days in real spring weather, if we should, as I hope, both be fairly well? Would this suit you, and where will you be when you leave, if you *do* leave Westgate-on-Sea?' I wrote at once my cordial acceptance of his invitation, and I looked forward with the highest pleasure to the happiness of spending a few quiet days with him, and of having a long talk with him over past times, and interchanging ideas as to the conditions and prospects of political affairs. It only remained to make definite arrangements for the expected meeting, but the definite

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arrangements were never made — it was not long before I received the sad news of my friend's death. The public life of these countries suffered a severe loss by the stroke which sent my friend to the grave. No man could have maintained a higher character in public and in private life. He had gone into politics only to serve purposes which were dear to him as a political and a social reformer, and many a victory, which has yet to be gained by those who thought and felt with him, will owe its final success to James Stansfeld's brilliant advocacy and earnest, untiring service.

No man has been more popular in the Lobby during my time, as, indeed, no man has been more popular in the House itself, than Sir John Mowbray. If I were set to describe the finest type of the English Conservative country gentleman, I should try to paint a picture of Sir John Mowbray. Settled and strong in his own political convictions, he was happy in the possession of that too rare faculty which enables a man to understand that others may have totally different opinions and yet be honest men and worthy citizens, and good fellows too. I always think that Sir John Mowbray and Sir Roger de Coverley would have been steady and congenial friends, if the destinies had only allowed Sir Roger to be born just about the time of the Battle of Waterloo, and to sit for a Conservative constituency in the House of Commons. Sir John Mowbray is a man of high education, and cultivated, even scholarly, tastes. He is an admirable speaker whenever he has occasion to make a speech, but he never takes part in a parliamentary debate unless when he feels that there is something to be said which, if he does not intervene, will perhaps remain unspoken. I have heard him on two or three occasions, such, for instance, as the election of a new

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Speaker in the House of Commons, deliver speeches which were really, in their way, models of graceful and impressive eloquence. He is now, since the death of Charles Villiers, the Father of the House; but Sir John is a man who never could grow old, nothing about him suggests the idea of the typical old gentleman who has a contempt for young fellows, thinks that nothing good is ever done in these times, and that all the services generally, military and civil, are going to the devil. Being a novel-writer by profession, I hope that I am not totally devoid of the imaginative faculty; but it would utterly pass the bounds of my imagination to think of any condition of things which could make Sir John Mowbray utter a word of wanton rudeness, or commit an unkind act, or behave to a man of inferior social position in such a manner as to impress him with a sense of his inferiority. It has been my good fortune, during many years, to be brought into somewhat close relationship with Sir John Mowbray, for he is the Chairman of the Committee of Selection, and I was for a long time one of its members. The Committee of Selection is a small body, consisting, I think, of only eight or nine members, and supposed to represent proportionately the different nationalities of the House, and is engaged in the work of appointing the Committees before which Private Bills, as they are called, are to be brought up for consideration. The Committee meets twice a week at least, and often has to make arrangements which involve a great deal of minute, practical, and personal discussion — discussion which, under injudicious management, might possibly lead to sharp controversy, and even to ill-temper. Under the control of Sir John Mowbray nothing like bickering or ill-temper ever is known. The desire of everyone is simply to

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arrange matters in the best possible way for the interests of public business, and there has never in my time been a single division taken by vote in the Committee of Selection. Sir John Mowbray is a master of all the business details with which the Committee can have to deal, and when he gives his decision as Chairman on any question in dispute, everyone feels satisfied that there is nothing more to be said on the matter. As a member of that Committee I was brought for many years into the most frequent communication with Sir John Mowbray, and I soon came to feel the most cordial admiration for him in his public and private capacity.

One personal anecdote I must mention. Everybody remembers the time when the Pigot forgeries were published, and the charges were made against the Irish Nationalist Members which led to the appointment of the Parnell Commission. Just at the time when the charges were made, and the political air was full of commotion, I went down one day to the House of Commons, and I met Sir John Mowbray in the Lobby. He had a group of friends around him whom I mentally set down as Conservative constituents from the University of Oxford. The House had not yet assembled, and up to that time no opportunity had arisen for any authoritative denial of the charges made against Parnell and his Party. As I was passing the group in the Lobby Sir John Mowbray's quick eye lighted on me. 'Mr. Justin McCarthy,' he said, in a tone of amazing solemnity, 'I want my friends here to see how we Conservative gentlemen treat Irish Members publicly accused of favouring conspiracies to murder.' Then in an instant the solemn manner was changed, and Sir John's eye beamed with its wonted animation and kindliness. 'Give me your hand, my dear McCarthy,' he exclaimed,

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‘and let me present you to my friends here, who will all be delighted to know you.’ No words of mine could tell how deeply I was touched by such a welcome from such a man at such a moment.

Another Conservative country gentleman, likewise of the old school, but of a quite different type, was the late Sir Walter Barttelot. He, too, was a strong Conservative, but he was a Conservative of rather the aggressive order, who flung his opinions defiantly in the face of his opponents, and seemed to ask them with the close of each speech he delivered: ‘Now, what have you got to say for yourselves after that?’ I should think Sir Walter Barttelot never had any doubt in his own mind as to the infallibility of his own judgment on any subject whatever. He was a Tory of the Tories. To him such men as Sir Stafford Northcote or the late Lord Derby must sometimes have seemed as bad as the Liberals or the Radicals themselves. He was a staunch party man, and always stood by his chiefs at the critical moment when the Division bell rang; but he often relieved his mind by having a good fling at them in the House before the moment came for passing into the Lobbies. Yet he was a thoroughly good-humoured, genial, and courteous man, when the heat of one of his short speeches was over; and he was liked by everyone on either side of the House. When I made my first speech in the House of Commons, on a motion which dealt with the condition of Ireland, Sir Walter Barttelot arose from the Tory benches to confute my arguments, and I was greatly gratified by the kindly manner with which he welcomed my first effort in the House, and by the generous compliments which he paid to me before proceeding to prove that I had made out no case whatever, and, in fact, knew nothing at all about the subject.

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With that evening an acquaintance began which was kept up on the most friendly terms until his death. There were few men in the House with whom I more often found myself engaged in pleasant and sociable conversation than this stout old Tory, although we probably had no single opinion in common on any political subject. I came to have a great liking for him, and I think he had a liking for me, and I was always glad to meet him and have a talk with him. Sir Walter was a great authority, or, at least, considered himself to be such, on all military subjects, and, indeed, he seemed to consider himself an authority on all subjects of whatever kind. He had inveterate prejudices, and yet I think there was hardly any subject involving a question of fair dealing between man and man, which might not have been safely left to his arbitration. Rugged and tough he certainly was, so far as his mode of argumentative warfare was concerned; he was often impetuous in style and extravagant in his denunciations of political opponents, and perhaps, among his political opponents, he reserved his strongest hostility for Irish Nationalists. Yet I think the Irish Nationalists liked him all the same, knew that it was only his way, and felt sure, at all events, that Sir Walter Barttelot would never be the man to deny a fair hearing to anyone who differed from him. He always seemed to me, with his hot temper, his impulsive ways, his ingrained prejudices, and his thorough chivalry of nature, to be just the sort of Tory squire and soldier whom Smollett would have delighted to describe. Everybody felt the deepest sympathy with him when the terrible news came of the death of his son, who lost his life in Africa with the Emin Pasha expedition. I wrote to his father expressing my deep regret at the sad news, and I received in

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reply a letter full of characteristic courage and kindness, which I think no one can read without the deepest interest. The letter is dated October 4, 1888.

‘MY DEAR MR. JUSTIN MCCARTHY, — I am exceedingly grateful to you for your kind letter of sympathy, which I feel all the more for the kind way in which you stated it. I have lost as true, as brave, as unselfish, and as affectionate a son as could be found. He had gallantly done his duty to his Queen and Country, and I had hoped and prayed he might have been spared to have done still greater things. He died at his *post* in the great cause of civilisation. It is indeed a consolation to receive the sympathy of one’s friends, though, politically, stern duty may widely separate us. It is also a great comfort to us to know that his services are appreciated. With many thanks,

‘Very truly yours,

‘WALTER B. BARTTELOT.’

The sympathy felt by Parliament and the public with stout Sir Walter Barttelot under his heavy loss may well be described as universal. There were some of us who had but little interest in that particular method of forwarding the cause of civilisation represented by the policy of adventure out of which grew the Emin Pasha expedition. There were some of us who could have wished that the life of Sir Walter’s gallant son could have been given up for a purpose more distinctly associated with the National welfare. But we all felt alike, that Barttelot the younger had done just as Barttelot the elder would have done — had counted his own life as nothing when that which he believed the call of duty was summoning him to danger. I must say, for myself, that the Tory benches, whether they happen to be on

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the right or the left of Mr. Speaker, never could look quite like themselves to me when the commanding figure of Sir Walter Barttelot was no longer to be seen rising from the third bench above the gangway to interpose in debate for the purpose of denouncing some measure of Liberal policy, some Radical scheme for the overthrow of altar and throne, or some Irish agitation for the abolition of landlords.

Perhaps I ought not to ask my readers to leave the Lobby without saying something about the editors of newspapers and newspaper correspondents, and journalists generally, who enjoyed the privilege of admission to its enclosure. Richard Holt Hutton, the late editor of the 'Spectator,' a man who had made the journal of which he was the chief conductor one of the most powerful organs of public opinion in England, was at one time to be seen very often in the Lobby. Hutton was a deep and an original thinker. He had a calm, clear, and absolutely independent judgment. He was an advocate indeed of all truly Liberal principles, but he never pledged himself, or his paper, to anything like a partisan subservience to the dictation of any statesman or any set of statesmen. Men of all political views found it necessary to read the 'Spectator,' and interesting as well as necessary, for one could never tell in advance what Mr. Hutton's opinions might be on any new measure or any fresh development of policy. That is to say, one could never be sure in advance that Mr. Hutton would support any line of action merely because it was taken by the Liberals, or censure some other course simply because it was adopted by the Tories. He was indeed a thinker rather than a politician; and I, for myself, used to feel especial pleasure in meeting him and listening to his talk in some company where

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art and literature and thought, rather than politics, formed the natural themes of conversation. Another frequent visitor to the Lobby was Mr. James Knowles, the editor of the 'Nineteenth Century.' I am sure that I do not betray any confidence rashly imposed on me when I say that I have more than once been a medium of communication between Mr. Knowles and some statesman of light and leading on either side of the House, whom the editor of the 'Nineteenth Century' wished to summon from the Treasury Bench or the Front Opposition Bench, with a view to a conference in the Lobby, no doubt with regard to some article to appear in the pages of a certain periodical.

Some years ago one could not go into the Lobby on any night of important business without meeting Mr. Frank Harrison Hill, then editor of the 'Daily News,' a man of many friends among Members of the House on both sides, a leading member of the Reform Club, and a conspicuous figure in London society. Frank Hill and his wife had the happy art of giving small and most agreeable dinner-parties, at which, so far as I can recollect, no one ever met a nonentity. What pleasant memories I have of those small dinner-parties! 'Eothen' Kinglake, Professor Huxley, James Russell Lowell, Robert Browning, Henry Irving, Chenery (the late editor of the 'Times,' a marvellous Oriental scholar), Charles Dilke, William Black, Henry James (the novelist), Charles Russell (now Lord Chief Justice of England), Sir John Pope Hennessy; these are but a few names which just occur to my memory of the many distinguished men whom I used to meet in that delightful flat in the Victoria Street quarter. Hill wrote at one time a wonderful series of 'Political Portraits,' which were published anonymously in the 'Daily News.'

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They soon attracted universal attention by their fidelity, by their vividness, and by a curious thrill of half-suppressed satire which went through them, too delicate for anything like caricature, but yet accentuating the peculiarities, and even the weaknesses, of the originals in such a manner as to make them in truth living pictures, in which each man was exhibited with all his characteristics, great and small, just as associates and intimates used to know him. I remember that while these political portraits were passing through the 'Daily News,' I was talking to Frank Hill, at a London evening party, when a friend of ours, who was editor of a weekly paper, suddenly seized Hill's arm and bluntly asked him who was the author of these admirable sketches. Hill was a little taken aback for a moment by the directness of the challenge ; but he soon recovered himself, and with that peculiar look of gravity which those who knew him knew always covered some humorous meaning, answered that the author was an obscure young man from the country, whose name was believed to be Smith. Thus the incident passed off for the moment, but some of us were greatly amused, and the public in general were greatly amazed when it was announced in the next number of the weekly paper that the 'Political Portraits' of the 'Daily News' were the first literary production of a young man from the provinces who bore the name of Smith.

The 'Daily News' used to be well represented in the Lobby. Sir John Robinson, as he now is, was as well known there as in the Reform Club, and generally had a group of Liberal Members around him. Mr. P. W. Claydon, who is now engaged with Mr. George W. E. Russell in carrying on the work of the Forward Liberals, was very often to be seen in the Lobby,

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and I need hardly tell any of those who are at all acquainted with the precincts, that Mr. Henry W. Lucy, who is generally understood to be the owner of the famous dog Toby, and who is said to be one of the greatest diners-out known to the London season, spent as much time in the Lobby as he could well spare from the Press Gallery. Mr. Massingham of the 'Daily Chronicle' is, or used to be, one of the most frequent visitors to the Lobby. His broad and liberal sympathies won for him a welcome companionship in any of its groups. A good old Tory Member once expressed to me his utter amazement at the fact that he had that very evening seen Mr. Massingham in the Lobby deep in conversation, first with Lord Rosebery, and next with Michael Davitt. 'What can there,' he asked, 'be in common between Lord Rosebery and Michael Davitt?' 'Well,' I suggested mildly, 'there is Massingham, at all events.' He did not see it, and was going on to argue that influential and representative Englishmen ought not to be seen conversing in sight of the whole Lobby with men like Michael Davitt. 'But then,' I pleaded, 'you ought not to be seen in sight of the whole Lobby conversing with me.' He grumbled out something to the effect that I was always joking, and he returned to the Tory benches.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS

MORE than a quarter of a century ago a bright little bubble of interest was made on the surface of London life, at least on the surface of that London life which takes any interest in things intellectual, by a course of Sunday Lectures, which had a remarkable man to deliver them and a peculiar purpose to promote. These lectures were given in a small room in Bouverie Street—off Fleet Street—Bouverie Street, which is sacred to newspaper and publishing offices; and only a very small stream of persons was drawn to the place. But the few who attended the lectures were men and women whose words carried commendation with them, and a lecturer might for the time have crammed Exeter Hall every Sunday without getting himself so much talked about among intellectual people as did the lecturer in the Bouverie Street room. Indeed, the audience was to some visitors quite as interesting as the lecturer, and I know of one at least who attended the lectures less for what he heard there than for the fact that the authoress of ‘Adam Bede’ and ‘Romola’ was always to be found among the listeners. The lecturer was Mr. Richard Congreve, and the subject of his discourses was ‘The Creed of Positivism.’ Mr. Congreve was then the head of the small and compact band of English Positivists. At the time to which I am now going back it was

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understood that he went as far in the direction of the creed which was the dream of Auguste Comte's later years as any British-born rate-paying citizen was likely to go. Congreve was a Rugby man, educated under Dr. Arnold, and afterwards became scholar, Fellow, and tutor at Oxford.

Positivism, I may perhaps explain to some of my readers, was the name given to the philosophy which Auguste Comte, more than any other man, helped to reduce to a system. Regarded as a philosophy of history and human society, its grand and fundamental doctrine merely was, that human life evolves itself in obedience to certain fixed laws, of which we could obtain a knowledge if only we applied ourselves to this study, as we do to all other studies in practical science, by the patient observation of phenomena. Auguste Comte's reduction of this philosophical theory to a scientific system was undoubtedly one of the grandest achievements of the human intellect. The philosophy did not begin with him or his generation, or indeed with any generation of which we have authentic record. Whenever there were men who were capable of thinking at all, there must have been some whose minds were instinct with this doctrine; but Comte made it a system, at once grand, simple, and fascinating; and he will always remain identified with its development in the memory of the modern world. Unfortunately Comte, in his later years, set to founding a religion also — a religion which has, perhaps, called down upon its founder and followers more ridicule, contempt, and discredit than any vagary of human imagination in our day. I speak of all this only to explain to my readers that there was some little difficulty in defining what was meant by a Positivist. If we meant merely a believer in the philosophical

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theory of history, then Positivists were, indeed, to be counted by thousands, and their captains have been among the greatest intellects of the world. In this sense John Stuart Mill was regarded as the greatest Positivist among Englishmen. But Mill utterly rejected and ridiculed the fantastic religion which Comte, in his days of declining mental power, sought to graft on his grand philosophy. In his treatise Mill showed no mercy to the Positivist religion, and indeed bitterly offended many of its votaries by his contemptuous exposure of its follies. What might have been said of Mill may be said of nineteen out of every twenty of the English followers of Comte. They accepted the philosophy as grand, scientific, inexorable truth; they rejected the religion with pity or with scorn, as a barren and fantastic chimera. Mr. Congreve was, in London, the leader of the small school who went in for taking all or nothing and to whom Auguste Comte was the prophet of a new and final religion, as well as the teacher of a new philosophy, and who used to hold their services on Sundays in a hall somewhere in the Holborn region. Now, this little school was the nucleus of the body of Englishmen of whom I am writing.

When I speak, therefore, of English Positivists, I do not mean the men who went no further than did John Stuart Mill. These men are to be found everywhere; they are of all schools, and all religions. I mean the much smaller body of votaries who went or who would have been inclined to go much farther, and accept Comte's religious teaching as a law of life. It is quite probable that even among the men who were once identified, more or less, in the public mind with Mr. Congreve and his school, there may have been some who did not adopt, or even concern themselves about, the

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religion of Positivism. A community of sentiment on historical and political questions, the habit of meeting together, consulting together, writing together, might naturally bring into the group men who would not go the length of adopting the Comte worship. It is quite possible, therefore, that in mentioning the names of English Positivists I may happen to speak of some who had no more to do with that worship than I have.

I mean, then, only the group of men, most of them highly cultured, many of them of remarkable ability, who were to be found in a literary and political phalanstery with Mr. Congreve, and of whom the majority were understood to be actual votaries of the religion of Comte.

The English Positivists stood out sharply against the background of political life. They were a little school, but as distinctly a school as were the Girondists, or the Manchester school, or the Massachusetts Abolitionists, or the Boston Transcendentalists. They were Radical, of course, but their Radicalism had a peculiar twist in it. On any given question of Radicalism they went as far as any practical politician did; but then they also went, in most cases, so very much farther, that they often alarmed the practical politician out of his ordinary composure. They were generally incisive of speech, aggressive of purpose, defiant of political prudery, and even of political prudence; their politics were always politics of idea. The Positivists once published a large and ponderous volume of essays on subjects of international policy. Each man who contributed an essay signed his name, and though a general community of idea and principle pervaded the book, it was not understood that everybody who wrote necessarily adopted all the views of his associates. The book, in fact, was con-

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structed on the model of the famous 'Essays and Reviews' which had sent such a thrill through the religious world a few years earlier. The political essays naturally failed to create anything like the sensation produced by their theological predecessors; but they did excite considerable attention and awoke the echoes. They astonished a good many Liberal politicians of the steady old school, and set many men thinking. What surprised people at first was the singular combination of literary culture and ultra-Radical opinion. If at the time this volume was published one had taken aside some practical politician in London and said, 'Here is a collection of practical essays written by a cluster of young men who all have university degrees after their names—will you read it?' the answer would certainly have been, 'Not I; it's sure to be some contemptible sham Tory rubbish: some "blood-and-culture" trash; some school-boy impertinence about demagogism and the mob.' Therefore the surprise was not slight to such men when they read the book and found that its central idea, its connecting thread, was a Radicalism which might well be called thorough—a Radicalism which made Bright look like a steady old Conservative; invited Mill to push his ideas a little farther; and poured scorn upon the Radical press for its slowness and its timidity. A simple, startling foreign policy was prescribed to England. Its gospel, after all, was but an old one—so old that it had been forgotten in English politics. It was merely 'Be just and fear not. Renounce all aggression; give back the spoils of conquest; give Gibraltar back to the Spaniards who own it; prepare to cast loose your colonial dependencies; prepare even to quit your loved India; ask the Irish people fairly and clearly what they want, and if they desire to

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be free of your rule, bid them go and be free, and God-speed.' All the old traditional policies seemed to these men only obsolete and odious superstitions. They would have England, the State, to stand up and act precisely as an Englishman of honour and conscience would do, and they treated with contempt any policy of expediency, or any policy whatever that aimed at any end but that of finding out the right thing to do and then doing it at once. This seemed to me, studying the school quite as an outside observer, its one great central idea; and it would, of course, be impossible not to honour the body of writers who proposed to show how it was to be accomplished.

But no school lives on one grand idea; and this school had its chimeras and crotchets — almost its crazes. For example, the leader of the Positivist band took great trouble to argue that Europe ought to form herself into a noble federation of States, to the exclusion of Russia, which was to be regarded as an Oriental, barbarous, unmanageable, intolerable sort of outsider, and pushed out of the European system altogether. Then a good many of the leading minds of the school were imbued with a passionate love for a sort of celestial despotism, an ideal imperialism which the people were first to create and then to obey — which was to teach them, house them, keep them in employment, keep them in health, and leave them nothing to do for themselves, while yet securing to them the most absolute freedom. To some of these men the condition of New York, where the State does hardly anything for the individual, seemed as distressing and objectionable as that of a despotic Paris or even Constantinople. A distinguished member of the school declared that nothing was to him more odious than any manner of voluntaryism, and that

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he hoped to see State direction introduced into every department of English social organisation. The connection of this theory with the principle of Positivism, which would mould all men into a sort of hierarchy, is natural and obvious enough, and there was, to support it, a certain reaction that had taken place in England against the voluntary principle, in education and in public charities. But, as put forward and argued by men of the school I describe, it may be taken as one of the most remarkable points of departure from the common tendency of thought in England. The Positivists were all, indeed, un-English, in the common use of a phrase which has ceased of late to be so dreaded a stigma as it once used to be in British politics. They were, as I have already said, a somewhat aggressive body, and were imbued with a contempt, which they never cared to conceal, for the average public opinion of the British Philistine, whether he presented himself as a West-end tradesman or a West-end peer.

The Positivists were almost always to be found in antagonism with this sort of public opinion. They attacked the Philistine, and no less readily they attacked the fastidious scholar and critic who had given the Philistine his name, and whose over-refining love of sweetness and light was so terribly offended by the rough and earnest work of Radical politics. Whatever the direction of average opinion, the influence of the Positivists was sure to tend the other way.

There was a time when the average English mind was suddenly seized with a passion of blended hate, fear, and contempt for Fenianism. The movement was first beginning to show itself in a serious light, and it had not gone far enough to show what it really was. It looked more formidable than it afterwards proved to be,

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and it seemed less like an ordinary rebellious organisation than like some mysterious and demoniacal league against property and public security. When I say seemed, I mean it seemed to the average English mind, to the ordinary society man, and the ordinary shop-keeper. It was at this time that the Positivists drew up a petition to be presented to the House of Commons, in which they called upon the House to insist that lenity should be shown to all Fenian prisoners, that they should be regarded as men driven into rebellion by a deep sense of injustice, and that measures should be taken to prevent the British troops from committing such excesses in Ireland as had been perpetrated in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, and more lately in Jamaica. Now, if there was anything peculiarly calculated to vex and aggravate the House of Commons and the English public generally, it was such a view of the business as this. Fenianism had not acquired the solemn and tragic interest which it obtained a little later. It is only just to say that Englishmen in general began to look with pity and a sort of respect on Fenianism, once it had become clear that it had among its followers men who, to quote the language of one of the least sympathetic of London newspapers, 'knew how to die.' But, at the time I speak of, Fenianism was a vague, mystic, accursed thing, which it was proper to regard as utterly detestable and contemptible. Imagine, then, what the feeling of the English county Member must have been when he learned that there were actually in London a set of educated Englishmen, nearly all trained in the universities, and nearly all moving in good society, who regarded the Fenians just as he — the county Member — regarded rebels against the Emperor of Austria or the Pope of Rome, and who not merely asked that consider-

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ation should be shown towards them, but went on to talk of the necessity of protecting them against the brutality of the loyal British soldier! The petition was signed by all who had a share in its preparation. Such men as Richard Congreve, J. M. Ludlow, Frederic Harrison, and Professor Beesly, were among the petitioners who risked their admission into respectable society by signing the document. The petitioners did not feel quite sure about getting any one of mark to present their appeal; and it is certain that a good many professed Liberals, of advanced opinions and full of sympathy with foreign rebels of any class or character, would have promptly refused to accept the uncongenial office. The petitioners, however, applied to one who was not likely to be influenced by any considerations but those of right and justice, and whom, moreover, nobody in the House of Commons would think of trying to put down. They asked Mr. Bright to present their petition, and there was no hesitation on his part. Mr. Bright not merely presented the petition, but read it, amidst the angry and impatient murmurs of an amazed and indignant House; and he declared, in tones of measured and impressive calmness, that he entirely approved and adopted the sentiments which the petitioners expressed. There was, of course, a storm of indignation, and some Members went the length of recommending that the petition should not even be received — an extreme and, indeed, extravagant course, in a country where the right of petition is supposed to be held sacred, and which the good sense of even some Tory Members promptly repudiated. Disraeli did his very best to aggravate the feeling of the House against the petitioners. During the Indian Mutiny he had himself loudly protested against the spirit of vengeance which our Press encouraged:

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asked whether we meant to make Nana Sahib the model for a British officer, and whether Moloch or Christ was our divinity. Yet he now declared that the language of the petition was a libel on the Indian army, and that nothing had ever occurred during the Bengal outbreak to warrant the imputations cast on the humanity of our soldiers.

I suppose it is not very easy to convey to a present-day reader a clear idea of the degree of boldness involved in the presentation of this celebrated petition. It really was a very bold thing to do—it was running right in the teeth of the public opinion of all the classes which are called respectable in England. It was, however, strictly characteristic of the men who signed it. Most, if not all of them, took a prominent part in the prosecution of Governor Eyre of Jamaica, for the lawless execution of George William Gordon, and the wholesale and merciless floggings and hangings by which order was made to reign in the island. Most of them, indeed, had a pretty spirit of contradiction of their own, and a pretty gift of sarcasm. I think I hardly remember any man who received, during an equal length of time, a greater amount of abuse from the Press than Professor Beesly in those days drew upon himself. It was at the time when the public mind was in its wildest thrill of horror at the really fearful revelations of organised murder in connection with the Sawgrinders' Union in Sheffield. The whole question of Trades Union organisation had been under discussion; and, even before the Sheffield revelations, the general voice of English respectability was against the workmen's societies altogether. But when the proofs of organised murder in connection with one union came out, a sort of panic took possession of the public mind. The first and not

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unnatural impulse was to assume that all trades unions must be very much the same sort of thing, and that societies of workmen were little better than organised Thuggism. Now, Professor Beesly, Mr. Frederic Harrison, and other signers of the petition for the Fenians, had long been prominent and influential advocates of the Trades Union principle. They had been, to the English artisan, something like what the Boston Abolitionist was so long to the negro. The Trades Union bodies, who felt aggrieved at the unjust suspicion which made them a party to hideous crimes they abhorred, began to hold public meetings to repudiate the charge, and record their detestation of the Sheffield outrages. Professor Beesly attended one of these meetings in London. He made a speech in which he told the working-men that he thought enough had been done in the way of disavowing crimes which no one had a right to impute to them; that there was no need of their further humiliating themselves; and that it was rather odd the English aristocracy had such a horror of murderers among the poorer classes, seeing how very fond they were of men like Eyre of Jamaica! In fact, Professor Beesly uplifted his voice very honestly, but rather recklessly, and at an unlucky time, against that social hypocrisy which is the stain and curse of London society, and which is never so happy as when it can find some chance of denouncing sin or crime among Republicans, or Irishmen, or working-men. There was nothing Professor Beesly said which had not sense and truth in it; but it might have been said more discreetly and at a better time, and it was said with a sarcastic and scornful bitterness, which was one of the characteristics of the speaker. For some days the London Press literally raged at the Professor. 'Punch' long persevered in

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calling him 'Professor Beastly'; a strong effort was made to obtain his expulsion from the college in which he had a chair. He was talked of and written of as if he were the advocate and accomplice of assassins, instead of being, as he was, an honourable gentleman and an enlightened scholar, whose great influence over the working-classes had always been exerted in the cause of peaceful progress and good order.

I give these random illustrations only to show in what manner the school of writers and thinkers I speak of usually presented themselves before the English public. Frederic Harrison would devote himself to a pertinacious, powerful series of attacks on Eyre, Governor of Jamaica, at a time when that personage was the hero and pet martyr of English society; then Professor Beesly horrified British respectability by pointing out that there were respectable murderers quite as bad as Broadhead; and Richard Congreve assailed the anonymous writers of the London Press as hired and masked assassins; or the whole band united in the defence of Fenians. This sort of thing had a startling effect upon the steady public mind of England; and it was thus, and not otherwise, that the public mind of England ever came to hear of these really gifted and honest, but very antagonistic and somewhat crotchety, men. Several of them were brilliant and powerful writers. Professor Beesly wrote with a keen, caustic, bitter force, which had something Parisian in it. I recall no writer in English journalism who more closely resembled a certain type of literary gladiator of French controversy. There was much of Eugene Pelletan in him, and something of Henri Rochefort, blended with a good deal reminiscent of Jules Simon. John Morley and Frederic Harrison have become powers in the politics and literature of England.

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I could mention many other men of the same school (I have already said that I do not know whether each and every one of these was, or was not, a professed Positivist) who would be distinguished as scholars and writers in the literature of any country. However they differed on minor points, however they may have differed in ability, in experience, in discretion, they had one peculiarity in common: they were to be found foremost in every Liberal and Radical cause; they were always to be found on the side of the weak, and standing up for the oppressed; they were enemies of cant; and were inveterate haters of vulgar idolatry and vulgar idols. I can remember that, at the time of the American Civil War, almost, if not quite, every man I have alluded to was a fearless and outspoken advocate of the cause of the North, and most of them were indefatigable workers on the unfashionable side, at a time when it was the right thing among men of 'culture' in London to champion the cause of the South. They wrote pamphlets; they wrote leading articles; they made speeches; they delivered lectures in out-of-the-way quarters to working-men and poor men of all kinds; they hardly came, in any prominent way, before the public, in most of this work. It brought them, probably, no notoriety or recognition abroad; but their work was a power in England.

I feel convinced that, in any case, the English working-men would have gone right on such a question as that which was at issue between North and South. As Motley once truly said in an address to the New York Historical Society, the workers and thinkers were never misled; but I am bound to say that the admirable knowledge of the realities of the subject, the clear, quick, penetrating judgment, and the patient, unswerving hope

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and confidence which were so signally displayed by the London working-men from first to last of that great struggle, were in no slight degree the result of the teaching and the labour of men like Professor Beesly and Frederic Harrison.

Were I to set up a typical Positivist, in order to make my present-day reader more readily and completely familiar with the picture which the word once called up in the minds of Londoners, I should do it in this way: I should exhibit my model Positivist as a man who was still young for anything like prominence in English public life, but not actually young in years — say, thirty-eight or forty. He had had a training at one of the great historical Universities, or, at all events, at the modern and popular University of London. He was a barrister, but did not practise much, and had probably a modest competence on which he could live, without working for the sake of living, and could indulge his own tastes in literature and politics. He had great earnestness and some self-conceit. He had an utter contempt for timid or half-measure men, and he scorned Whigs even more than Tories. He devoted much of his time generously and patiently to the political and other instruction of working-men. He plunged gallantly and fearlessly into controversy, and was not easily worsted, for his pen was sharp and his ink very acrid. In any great question stirring, with a serious principle or a deep human interest at the heart of it, he was sure to be found on the right side. Where the controversy was of a smaller kind, and admitted of a crotchet, then he was pretty sure to bring out a crotchet of some kind. He wrote pamphlets, and went to immense trouble to get up the facts, and went to some expense to give them to the world, and he never grudged trouble or money

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where any cause or even any crotchet was to be served. He was ready to stand up alone, against all the world, if need be, for his opinions or his friends. Benevolent schemes which were of the nature of mere charity he seldom concerned himself about. He was for giving men their political rights, and educating them — if necessary, compelling them to be educated; and he had little faith in any other way of doing good. He had, of course, a high admiration for, and faith in, John Stuart Mill. His nature was not quite reverential — in general, he was rather inclined to sit in the chair of the scorner; but if he revered any man it would be Mill. He admired the manly, noble character of Bright, and his calm, strong eloquence. I do not think he cared much about Gladstone — I rather fancy our positivist looked upon Gladstone as somewhat weak and unsteady, and with him to be weak was indeed to be miserable. Disraeli was to him an object of entire scorn and detestation, for he could endure no one who had not deeply-rooted principles of some kind. He had a crotchet about Russia, a theory about China; he could get quite beside himself in his anger over the anonymous leading articles of the London Press. He was not an English type of man at all, in the present and conventional sense. He cared not a rush about tradition, and mocked at the wisdom of our ancestors. The bare fact that some custom, or institution, or way of thinking had been sanctioned and hallowed by long generations of usage, was, in his eyes, rather a *prima facie* reason for despising it than otherwise. He was pitilessly intolerant of all superstitions, save his own: that is to say, he was intolerant in words and logic and ridicule; for the wildest superstition would have found him its defender, if it once came to be practically oppressed or even

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threatened. He was 'ever a fighter,' like one of Browning's heroes; he was the knight-errant, the Quixote of modern politics. He admired George Eliot in literature, and, I should say, he regarded Charles Dickens as a sort of person who did very well to amuse idlers and ignorant people. Life with him was a very earnest business, and, although he had a pretty gift of sarcasm, which he used as a weapon against his enemies, I could not, with any effort of imagination, picture him to myself as in the act of making a joke.

A small drawing-room would assuredly have held all the London Positivists who made themselves effective in English politics. Yet they have become something of a power in the land, and their public influence has been almost wholly for good. They set up no propaganda that I ever saw or heard of as regards either philosophy or religion. The course of lectures I have already referred to was the nearest approach to any diffusion of their peculiar doctrines which I can remember, and it created some sensation at the time, though little or no publicity was sought for it.

So quietly these men pursued their course, that it was long indeed before any idea got abroad that the cluster of highly educated, ultra-Radical thinkers, who were to be found sharp-shooting on the side of every great human principle and every oppressed cause, and who seemed positively to delight in standing up against the vulgar rush of public opinion, were anything more than chance associates, or were bound by any tie more close and firm than that of general political sympathy. Even when people began to know them, and to classify them, in a vague sort of way, as 'those Positivists,' they made so little parade of any peculiarity of faith that, without precise and personal knowledge, it would have

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been rash to say for certain that this or that member of the group was, or was not, an actual professor of the Comtist religion.

I do not myself attempt to explain why the followers of Comte's worship should, at least in England, be always on the side of liberty, and equality, and human progress ; I only say that they were so, and I recall the fact that this, then new, set or sect arose to influence English politics, and that their influence and origin were different from anything which, judging by the history of previous generations, one might naturally have been led to expect. 'Culture,' in England at one time, almost invariably ranked itself on the side of privilege. The Oxford undergraduate shouted himself hoarse in cheering for Disraeli and groaning for Bright. Oxford rejected Gladstone the moment he became a Liberal. The vigorous Radicalism of Thorold Rogers cost him his chair as Professor of Political Economy, although no man was a more perfect master of some of the more important branches of that science. The very journals which were started for the sake of being read by men of 'culture,' were sure to throw their influence, nine times out of ten, into the cause of privilege and class ascendancy. But suddenly there came out from the very bosom of the Universities a band of keen, acute, fearless gladiators, who threw themselves into the van of every great movement that worked for democracy, equality, and freedom. They invaded the press and the platform ; they wrote in this journal and that ; they were ready for any assailant, however big ; they were willing to work with any ally, however small ; they shrunk from no logical consequence or practical inconvenience of any argument or opinion ; they took the working-man by the hand and told him all they

knew, and — the fact is worth studying — their scholarship and his no-scholarship often came to the same conclusion.

Positivism, I am told, is still flourishing in France, and has a literary organ all to itself, and maintains regular places of meeting in Paris and other great French cities. In London, I believe, it has two recognised places for Sunday meetings, and has headquarters also in some of the English provincial towns. But the English Positivists do not seem to make their existence quite so evident as they did in the past days. Some of their leading men have distinguished themselves so far in public life that we have now forgotten to associate them with any peculiarity of sectarian organisation. Take a man like my friend John Morley, for instance; we think of him as an author and a statesman, as a Cabinet Minister, as an administrator of Ireland; some people would perhaps just now think of him as a 'Little Englander,' to use one of the nicknames which Lord Kimberley justly censured the other day. 'Punch,' in one of its cartoons during the winter, pictured him as a Diogenes going about with his lantern in the futile search for a genuine Liberal. But nobody thinks of him now as a Positivist, and the majority of people have never heard that he had anything to do with the cult of Positivism, and could not form the least idea, from anything they had lately heard or read about him, as to whether he was or was not a likely man to be interested in such a form of faith. Then, again, take Mr. Frederic Harrison. Mr. Harrison has been a member of the London County Council, and has even been an alderman. It shook all our faith in nomenclature to think of Frederic Harrison as an alderman; but we began to get used to it somehow. Harrison has noble dreams and

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noble schemes for the beautifying of London, and he has identified himself with the movement for the national commemoration of the thousandth anniversary of King Alfred's death. It is cheering to remember that in both these projects there is still so much left of the noble, poetical dreamer as to reconcile in our minds Frederic Harrison the alderman with Frederic Harrison the Positivist. I cannot call to mind the name of any one of those who made up the school of English Positivists who has not played an honourable part in English public or private life. The English Positivists have always been to me a group of most interesting figures, ever since the days when George Eliot used to listen to Richard Congreve's lectures, the days when George Henry Lewes first drew my attention to the little school of men, then nearly all young, and only beginning to emerge from obscurity, who disturbed the prosaic ways of ordinary London life by their aggressive advocacy of new ideas.

CHAPTER XXXIV

LAW AND PHYSIC

NEARLY twenty years ago I was dining, one day, in the earlier part of the Parliamentary session, at the house of that model host, diplomatist, political debater, and after-dinner speaker, the late Lord Granville. Among the company were the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Hartington as he then was; Sir Alexander Cockburn; Dr. Quain, afterwards Sir Richard Quain; and James Knowles, editor of the 'Nineteenth Century.' Some talk began, as was but natural, about the paintings in the Royal Academy, and especially about a picture, by Sir Edward Poynter, of a visit of Venus and her nymphs to Æsculapius. The goddess and her attendant ladies were, I should say, painted after the fashion of Hans Breitmann's 'Wassermädchen.' One of the guests, who had apparently not been listening to all the conversation, said that he had noticed the picture, in passing, but had not been able to make out its subject. Then Sir Alexander Cockburn struck in with a few words of explanation, in his sweet clear voice: 'It's very simple,' he said; 'it represents Dr. Quain receiving a morning visit from some of his lady patients.' After a while the conversation turned upon other subjects, and rested for a moment on a matrimonial quarrel which was then creating some talk in society. 'He left her at the pew door,' one of the company remarked with sever-

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ity. 'Proh Pudor!' exclaimed Sir Alexander Cockburn. Whereat, as is said in 'Troilus and Cressida,' we all so laughed that it passed. I wish I could remember half the good things that passed that night between law and physic — between Sir Alexander Cockburn and Dr. Quain. Both men were worthy to have found a Boswell. Sir Alexander was one of the few who in our time have won fame alike at the Bar, in the House of Commons, and on the Bench. But he ought to have won fame also as a sayer of good things, and to win such fame he only needed a faithful chronicler.

Sir Richard Quain lived mainly, no doubt, for the benefit of his patients and of medical science, but he lived also a good deal, whether he meant it or not, for the delight of society. I never knew a man who retained, after anything like the same number of years passed in London, such an unspoiled Munster accent, which he acquired in his far distant childhood. Nobody could tell a good story better, no one could freshen up a good story into such new and animated life. When listening to his wonderful flow of anecdote, delivered with his own inimitable humour, I have often thought of the advice given by a fellow-countryman of his and mine to a story-teller, 'Niver borrow, always invint.' For I used to meet Sir Richard Quain very often at one time, and, listening to his inexhaustible outpouring of new stories, I was forced to the conclusion that he could not possibly have picked them all up, and that a large proportion of them must have borne testimony to his own creative faculty. Nor is there anything in this suggestion at all disparaging to the memory of a true-hearted and a good man, for I know of no moral law to condemn one man for inventing stories which he distributes for nothing, and to commend another man for

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inventing stories which he sells to a publisher. Sir Richard Quain used to be a frequent visitor, up to the time of his last illness, at the house of my friend Fletcher Moulton, and whenever he appeared his coming always gladdened the drawing-room and the dining-room. It was not merely that no one could have withstood his marvellous humour, his delightful stories, his odd repartees, and his bewildering paradoxes; but there was the sunny freshness of what seemed an everlasting youth about him, and, despite thinning hairs and growing wrinkles, it did not seem that his years any more than his accent had changed since first he left his native banks of Black Water.

Quain loved Society as much as Society loved him, and that is saying a great deal. He was a welcome guest at all the houses of all the highest personages in the land, to use the formal newspaper phrase, and I know that he brought good cheer into the homes of his poorest patients. If only Goldsmith or Sterne could have lived to write a comedy for him, with Quain himself, just as he was, for its principal character, and if Quain himself could only have gone upon the stage and played the part with his own accent and his own manner, what a fame that comedy and that actor would have made! Still it may be fairly argued that Quain won fame enough, and did good enough in the part which the kindly fates assigned to him, and he did not live in the time of Sterne or Goldsmith; and, in any case, he would probably have ceased to be himself, and lost all the best of his Irish accent, the moment he ventured to appear upon the boards. So we may well be content that he was what he was and nothing else. Up to the last it was a wonderful sight to see him run up a high flight of stairs. No man is old, whatever his years, who

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can run up and down stairs with a step so elastic. It was a refreshing sight to see Sir Richard Quain in the company of little children — some of his grandchildren, for instance; they and he were so young together. If he had lived in the grand old classic days some of the poets would have made a fable about him, and would have told the world that he was allowed his choice between youth and immortality, and was further privileged in being allowed a long time in which to make up his mind, so that when at last he made up his mind, and decided against immortality, there was no time left for him, by the ordinary laws of life, to grow old, and he had to die in his youth, as he would not abide upon the earth for ever.

I have spoken more than once in these pages about Fletcher Moulton, and I would have written more, but that I wished to avoid saying much about men and women who are still living, and who are likely, it is to be hoped, to live and look upon the earth for a long time to come. Fletcher Moulton is, like Sir Alexander Cockburn, one of the men whom Nature has qualified for success alike at the Bar and in the House of Commons. It is much too soon, however, to anticipate the career of one who has not yet given his measure, as the French phrase goes; and therefore I shall speak of Fletcher Moulton as a host, and as a friend, and not as an advocate, or a Member of the House of Commons. I have the most delightful recollections of Fletcher Moulton as a host, and of his household. Men and women of intellect and culture, wit and humour, of grace and refinement, were always to be met with at his hospitable table. The host has a soul for literature and art, as well as for law and politics. The pictures on his walls speak for his taste in art, and the books on

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his shelves and the owner's talk about his books, tell eloquently of his taste for letters. I have passed hours at his house during which a stranger never might have known that our host was a lawyer by profession, so naturally did the talk run on about the newest books and the oldest books, about the latest picture show, about the newest thing in French art, and the piece that had just been brought out at the Lyceum or the Criterion. Fletcher Moulton had a cordial welcome for men and women of distinction from foreign countries, and the talk at his dinner-table was thus often freshened by some new ideas which threw a genuine light on this or that crisis, or change of thought, or current of popular feeling in some Continental city, or some State of the great Republic beyond the Atlantic.

Our host, too, enjoyed the society of rising young authors and artists and politicians, and did not wait till such men had quite risen and become recognised objects of public admiration. The first time I ever met Mr. Anthony Hope Hawkins was at Fletcher Moulton's house, and at a time when the world was only just beginning to find out that there was something very promising and altogether out of the common in the 'Dolly Dialogues' which the 'Westminster Gazette' was then publishing every evening. I met Sir Martin Conway and Edward Fitzgerald there before the Geographical Societies of the world had learned to bow down to them as monarchs of mountains. There, too, I met Frank Dicksee, long before he had become a Royal Academician, but at a time when it was already evident to all eyes that to such a position he was sure to come. There were veterans, too, in letters and art and journalism. My dear old friend Mrs. Lynn Linton was a frequent visitor. Mrs. Linton, who so often

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seemed to dip her pen in gall, and must surely, for all her originality of style and thought, have borrowed the gall for the purpose, seeing that her own nature was all made up of generosity and sweetness. What a time one is invited to look back upon when thinking of Mrs. Linton's literary career! Can it be that the gentle, sweet, motherly old lady whom we used to meet lately in so many houses was the parent in literature of that terrible 'Girl of the Period,' and that fearsome 'Shrieking Sisterhood' introduced to an astonished world by the 'Saturday Review' in those far-off days which make us feel old when we think of them? Mr. Blowitz, the famous Paris Correspondent of the 'Times,' was often to be met with in the same house, and so, too, was my dear old friend Edward F. S. Pigott, the late Examiner of Plays, a man steeped to the lips in the best literature of his own country and of France and Italy, the companion of Dickens and Thackeray, the brilliant leader-writer and critic of the 'Daily News.'

It would seem almost superfluous to say that one expected to meet eminent lawyers at Fletcher Moulton's house and was not disappointed. I have mentioned in a former chapter of this book some talk which was started there one evening by the late Lord Coleridge, and which inspired me with a wish to give to my readers an attempt at a portrait of Prince Napoleon. Frank Lockwood, whose early death surrounds with tragic memories a name and a form that we all associated for many years only with the thought of racy humour, of brilliant wit, of a career that seemed to identify itself with success and with happiness, was a frequent guest at Fletcher Moulton's house in Onslow Square. So was Sir Richard Webster, whose position as a great Conservative lawyer and politician did not make him any

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the less steady a friend of Fletcher Moulton, the Radical politician, at whose table often sat some of those very Irish Nationalists whom it became the duty of Sir Richard Webster to prosecute in the days of the Parnell Commission. Among the foreign visitors whom I met at Fletcher Moulton's house there was one whom I cannot help always associating with an anecdote which caused some amusement to the household at the time. He was a young Frenchman who had acquired a certain command of fluent English, but who, as it will be seen, was not quite up to all the conventional niceties of the language. He came to stay on a visit at Onslow Square, and on the day of his arrival one of the daughters of the house happened to mention to him that there was to be a dinner party that evening. 'Ah, then,' he said, with the satisfied smile of one who knows all about it, and is master of the situation, 'I shall come down in my night clothes.'

The late Lord Coleridge, as everyone knows, was an irreconcilable enemy of the practice of vivisection, and is followed to this day by his son, Stephen Coleridge. I shall never forget the impression produced on me by the exhaustive and masterly speech in which he impressed his views on the House of Lords. I remember that he was greatly amused, somewhere about the same time, by an absurd defect in a Bill introduced on the subject by the Government of the day, a mistake which was pointed out and made a mockery of by the late Robert Lowe. The Bill was honestly intended to prevent some of the evils of which the anti-vivisectionists complained, but in one of its clauses at least it was particularly unlucky. I cannot pretend to give the exact words of the clause, but I know that its purport was to restrict anyone from practising vivisection in the

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interests of science, unless he were provided with a proper certificate. Lowe pounced upon the wording of the clause, and with characteristic ingenuity made it clear that a man torturing a dumb animal had only to plead, in order to escape all penalty, that he did it, not in the interests of science, but merely for the fun of the thing, that, as Lowe put it, he was vivisecting the monkey for the pleasure of seeing the comical faces which the monkey would make under the process.

My acquaintance with the Lord Chief Justice of England began when he was only plain Mr. Charles Russell. I had not yet entered the House of Commons when it was my good fortune to be invited to meet him at dinner, and our acquaintance, I hope I may call it our friendship, has been kept up unimpaired since that day. I had some talk with Charles Russell, on that first occasion of our meeting, about the Home Rule question, which was then beginning to make itself a prominent subject in political life. Russell did not yet quite see his way to the adoption of the principle of Home Rule; but I could then discern, as I could afterwards in the case of Mr. Gladstone, that his opinions were turning in that direction, and I felt little doubt that the views as yet unsettled would, with that clear and logical mind to guide them, soon find themselves on the right way. Charles Russell, however, presented himself as a Parliamentary candidate in the first instance, not as a Home Ruler, but as an Irish Catholic and Liberal, who was a determined advocate of a complete reorganisation of the Irish Land Tenure System, of Religious Equality, and of governing Ireland generally according to Irish ideas. It was after he had obtained his seat in the House of Commons, without the strength of the popular movement to assist him, that he became

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a proclaimed Home Ruler. He pursued in the House a course entirely independent of either Liberal or Conservative Government, and he rendered great service to the movement for an improved Land Tenure System for Ireland, by his writings as well as by his speeches. It is stated, and I believe with perfect truth, that when Mr. Gladstone's Government was preparing a Land Tenure Bill for Ireland, a draft of the first scheme was sent to Russell with a request that he would furnish the Cabinet with any suggestions for its improvement. Russell read the draft Bill carefully through, and found it utterly weak and inadequate for its purpose. He returned it with the brief observation that the only improvement he could suggest was to put the draft into the fire. The Bill took a much stronger form after this suggestion, and opened a new era in land legislation for Ireland. Russell's success in the House of Commons was distinct and beyond question, although he never found an opportunity there for obtaining such a position as he won for himself in his more suitable field for action as an advocate at the Bar. He proved a thorough friend of the Irish Nationalist Party, although he never was actually identified with their action, and indeed on one memorable occasion entered into a sharp and brilliant personal encounter with Parnell himself. I had the honour of being defended by Sir Charles Russell, as he then was, when I found myself arraigned with a number of my friends, no more guilty than I, on a charge of having fomented conspiracy for murder. This was at the time of the Parnell Commission, when Sir Charles Russell's cross-examination disposed of the Pigott forgeries in a few moments, and when his speech for the defence became one of the historic triumphs of England's forensic eloquence. Sir Charles Russell and

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I were fellow-sufferers, if I may use that expression, in the failure of the Irish Industrial Exhibition at Earl's Court in 1888, for we were both members of the Executive Committee, along with Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Arthur Hill, and many others.

Every Irishman, whatever his political views, must have felt proud of the success won by the splendid abilities of Lord Russell of Killowen. Thomas Moore lamented for Ireland at the time when the torch that must light an Irishman on dignity's way must be caught from the pile where his country expires. Charles Russell was born in happier days; but had he been born in the worst of times for an Irishman and a Catholic, he would have held sternly aloof from dignity's way, rather than be lighted on that course by a torch caught from his country's funeral pile. He never went one step out of the path of high-principled independence to conciliate any party or any power, and Great Britain as well as Ireland rejoiced at his well-earned success, and felt proud of him.

During his time in the House of Commons, and since, I had many opportunities of meeting Henry James, now Lord James of Hereford. I can distinctly recall to memory the evening when he made his first great and recognised success in the House of Commons. It was on the occasion of a motion made by Isaac Butt, concerning a judgment given by the once notorious Mr. Justice Keogh, on the Galway Election Petition. The occasion was one of great political interest at the time, but it would be hard indeed to enliven it with any gleam of animation for the ordinary reader of to-day. Butt was the foremost man at the Irish Bar, and he had won a great and recognised success as a debater in the House of Commons. Butt had, one might have thought, a

very easy case to make out. His object was to invite Parliamentary and public censure on the head of Mr. Justice Keogh, whose own career and character had already brought censure enough with them. The House of Commons well remembered Keogh, his brilliant audacity as a Parliamentary debater, his association with John and James Sadleir, and their extraordinary financial frauds, which had culminated in the suicide of one and the flight and expulsion from Parliament of the other. The House knew that since, by an extraordinary exercise of administrative authority, impossible in our times, Keogh had been raised to the bench of justice in Ireland, and that ever since his elevation he had done his best to denounce and to vilify the national cause, by the advocacy of which he had made himself worth purchase as a Member of Parliament. Therefore it might well have been expected that Butt would have an easy task in all he could seriously hope to accomplish, that is, in heaping further odium on the already odious head of Mr. Justice Keogh. When Henry James, then almost new to the House, rose to take part in the debate, most of the listeners were uncertain whether he meant to support Butt's motion or to oppose it. The interest in the whole question was beginning to languish, for no practical result of any immediate kind was likely to follow from Butt's enterprise, and nothing said against Mr. Justice Keogh could have added one cubit to the stature of the cairn of obloquy which events had already piled upon his Parliamentary career. But the interest of the House and of the Galleries soon freshened and brightened as Henry James went on with his speech. It was a speech in opposition to the motion, but not, of course, in defence of the character of Mr. Justice Keogh. James did not say one word to suggest a sym-

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pathy, which we may be sure he never felt, with Keogh's previous career and character. He only attacked the motion itself as one wholly impracticable for any beneficial purpose, and merely calculated to bring the House of Commons into a most undesirable attitude towards the Judicial Bench. The leading members of the Government must have begun to breathe more freely again, while that amazingly clever speech was holding captive the attention of the House. The speech came in most timely fashion to the relief of the Government, and its influence was all the more effective because it was obviously not made for the mere purpose of helping any Government out of a difficulty. It came as the utterance of an impartial observer, of one who intervened, not for the sake of this party or that, but to help the House itself out of a difficulty by putting the true nature of the case aptly and fully before it. Nothing could have been more graceful and more impressive than the language, tone, and manner of the speaker, and many passages of the speech rose to the height of a genuine Parliamentary eloquence.

I may say for myself that, as one who had for some time been a close student of Parliamentary life, I felt as certain that evening that Henry James was destined to a brilliant career in the House of Commons, as anyone present at the first performance of Adelina Patti at the Italian Opera, or of Christine Nilsson at Her Majesty's Theatre, could have felt certain of the future career of either singer. I did not expect that Henry James would become such an orator as Gladstone or Bright; and I did not expect that Patti would become another Grisi, or Nilsson another Jenny Lind. I foresaw — anybody might have foreseen — not only the success, but the kind of success, and I knew then, just as well as I know it

now, that in Henry James the House had got one of its most brilliant debaters. Since that time I have followed his career, as everybody must have done, with interest and admiration, and even when the political course which he felt bound to take brought him into antagonism with the cause which I had most at heart, I have always felt convinced that he acted but in obedience to the guidance of his judgment and his conscience. The House of Commons is a heavy loser by the withdrawal of such a brilliant swordsman from its field of fight, and I do not suppose even Lord James of Hereford could do much to fasten attention upon the debates of the House of Lords. I do not feel at liberty in these 'Reminiscences' to say much about the private doings of any of those whom it has been my good fortune to know, otherwise I could tell of generous and kindly things done by Lord James where there was no possible expectation of public praise to reward any sympathetic action.

I have often felt that to an Irish Nationalist and an advanced Radical like myself there is yet another grievance against the House of Lords to be added to those which we are in the daily habit of putting forward, the grievance that it drains away from the House of Commons its cleverest legal members. Any Member of the House of Commons, whatever his political opinions, must feel the grievance all the same, whether the man thus withdrawn by a so-called elevation were Liberal or Conservative. The Representative House suffered a great loss in this way when Henry Matthews became Lord Llandaff, and a brilliant and powerful debater was thus removed from the Chamber where the gift is really effective. I, for one, thought we could as ill afford to lose him as we could afford to lose Sir Farrer Herschell when

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he too was translated to the Upper House. Henry Matthews and Farrer Herschell may be ranked together, because of the fact that they were lawyers who were something more than mere lawyers in the House of Commons, and that they could enter on any public debate with a breadth and clearness of vision which belonged to the born politician and to the Parliamentary orator. The same might be said of the late Lord Cairns, who was one of the ablest lieutenants Disraeli ever had in the House of Commons. During the course of a debate, many years ago, when several able and skilled lawyers had spoken in succession on some great political question, Sir James Graham carried his audience with him when, in the opening of a powerful speech, he expressed a hope that now, at last, the House had got fairly out of the region of *nisi prius*. The remark would have carried no meaning with it if Sir James Graham had been following such lawyers as Henry James or Henry Matthews as Herschell or Cairns. When these men spoke on a question purely political, the House of Commons soon forgot that they were lawyers by profession, and only regarded them as eloquent and powerful debaters. It is to my mind a distinct evidence of an improved condition in the debating character of the House of Commons that the great lawyers there are no longer a class apart, as they seem to have been considered at the time when Macaulay wrote one of his most famous essays.

I have headed this chapter 'Law and Physic,' but I have wandered almost altogether away into a discourse upon the House of Commons, an assembly in which the busy physician has seldom inclination or opportunity to take any personal part; yet I have known doctors who, I think, if they had had the inclination, and could have

found the time, might have made for themselves a distinguished and very useful position in some of the debates of our great representative chamber. Those who knew the late John Marshall will agree with me that such intellectual and argumentative resources as his might have found ample scope even in some of the great debates which had nothing to do with the question of Vaccination, or with some of the social questions to which Sir James Stansfeld gave up so much of his reforming energy. The same might be said of Sir Henry Thompson, whose knowledge of art and letters, and whose enlightened sympathies on so many questions of social improvement, might have made him an authority in the House on many subjects which had no direct connection with the practice of medicine. Of course we had the late Lord Playfair, who, as Dr. Playfair, and afterwards as Sir Lyon Playfair, took a frequent and important part in the business of the House of Commons. Playfair was really a brilliant and powerful speaker; he had a vein of genuine humour, and some of his speeches rose to the height of true Parliamentary eloquence. I had the honour of a personal friendship with Sir Lyon Playfair for many years, while he was in the House of Commons, and was often hospitably welcomed in his home, and although it once fell to his duties when he was Chairman of Committees to suspend me from the service of the House, with several other Irish obstructive Members, I can declare with absolute truth that my fellow-sufferers and myself bore him no more malice for his official sentence of temporary exclusion, than he felt personal rancour towards us in decreeing our expulsion.

Sir Lyon Playfair fell upon unlucky times during his occupation of the post which may be described as that of Deputy-Speaker. He was a man of the kindest heart,

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and was on terms of personal friendship with some of the obstructive Members who were doing their best to delay the passing of the various clauses in this or that Government measure. He had to do his duty as official Chairman, and he did his duty but with an obvious reluctance which greatly mollified the victims of his authority, and occasionally amused some of the less responsible and more cynical Members of the House. One exercise of his authority, strictly legitimate in itself, led to an odd incident, and brought an important alteration in the rules of the House. A systematised, acknowledged, avowed, and definite obstruction had been going on for some days, and it became part of the Chairman's duty to notify to the Government the names of those who had taken part in it, in order that their suspension might be moved, carried, and announced by the Speaker. It was a sweeping exercise of authority, and included all the members of the party which had made itself responsible for the obstructive policy. One distinguished member of the party, my friend John Dillon, had been absent from the House for several days, owing to an attack of illness. When he found himself well enough to be able to go out he went down to the House at the usual time, crossed the Lobby tranquilly, and was about to enter the sacred Chamber without any thought of possible check or hindrance. He was stopped by the doorkeeper, and politely informed that he must not go into the House. 'Why not?' he asked, in natural amazement. Because, was the answer, he had been suspended from the service of the House for a week. 'Suspended, for what?' he demanded. For continued obstruction of business, was the answer. In vain Dillon argued that a man who had been for several days in a sick bed at home could not possibly have been

obstructing the business of the House. The higher authorities when appealed to were inexorable. His name was on the list of those who were formally suspended from the service of the House, and to the sentence of temporary expulsion, thus pronounced, the authorities could make no exception. The incident naturally created infinite amusement. It became apparent to all reasonable persons at once that the doctrine of what may be called constructive obstruction could no longer be maintained by an assembly of rational men. Therefore a definite rule had to be agreed upon that for the future no man could be condemned for wilful obstruction unless he had wilfully obstructed in his own proper person, and that the mere fact of his belonging to a party which had adopted wilful obstruction as a weapon of Parliamentary warfare, did not involve in its penalty one who had taken no part whatever in the particular action which brought down the censure.

One of the best known and most popular of the medical men in London Society, Dr. Robson Roose, I can claim as a friend of many years' standing, to whom I am under much obligation both as a genial host and as a skilful physician. At Dr. Roose's dinner parties one met public men of all orders and walks of life — statesmen, authors, artists, lawyers and doctors, commercial magnates, and foreign diplomatists, like Rustem Pacha. Conservatives and Radicals from either House of Parliament put aside their differences of political opinion at that pleasant dinner table. Lord Randolph Churchill was to be met there, and some of the bright luminaries of 'Punch' sparkled around that board; and it was there that I met my old friend Edmund Yates for the last time. I remember one occasion, and one only, when the near neighbourhood of Dr. Roose at a social gathering

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was an unwelcome presence to me. I must tell the story, so as to justify Roose and myself alike. One of our most successful and celebrated dramatic authors had bidden a large number of his friends to an oyster supper. It would not be easy to find even in a London season a more brilliant gathering. The guests were very numerous, and although the house was large and its apartments were spacious, it was impossible to seat all the company in one single room. Therefore we were distributed over many chambers, and each room had its array of small tables. Now I was and am, like most other reasonable creatures, a great lover of oysters. I was born in a city which prided itself justly on the size and the flavour of its harbour oysters. But the banquet which I am describing was given just at the time when there was a tremendous popular scare about the oyster, and the supposed fatality of his association with the germs of typhoid fever. I had but just recovered from an illness, during which Dr. Roose had been my kindly and careful medical attendant. I was that evening particularly anxious for a revel in oysters, and only fancy my feelings when I found myself seated at one of the small tables beside Dr. Roose! As will easily be imagined, our host had not limited his entertainment to a set-out of oysters, and there were plenty of other good things on each table. But I was particularly in the humour for oysters, and the kind Dr. Roose, for all his kindness, was inexorable. Like Orlando, in 'As you like it,' he said, 'Forbear and eat no more;' and although I might have answered, like Jacques, 'Why, I have eat none yet,' it would have availed me nothing, for the interdict prevailed. Thus for once, and once only, I found the presence of my dear old friend a somewhat unwelcome presence.

LAW AND PHYSIC

Let me recall one other anecdote concerning a distinguished physician, under whose medical care, however, I have never been placed. This doctor, who stood in the very front rank of his profession, and is now no longer living, was very strict in his injunctions to several of my friends, that they must carefully abstain from champagne. One evening I sat next to him at a dinner party, and I observed that he was drinking champagne himself. I had the audacity to say to him, 'Why, doctor, I always thought you were a deadly foe to such a drink as that.' 'Why did you think so?' he asked. 'Because,' I explained, 'ever so many of your patients have told me that you absolutely forbade them the use of champagne.' 'So I did,' he blandly replied, 'but it does not follow that because it was bad for them it must needs be bad for me.' 'Or for me?' I hopefully inquired. 'Ah,' he said, 'you are not in my jurisdiction.' I thought I had got off easily, considering the boldness of my intrusion, and I dropped the subject and drank my champagne.

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CHAPTER XXXV

THE KINGSLEYS

Two or three years ago I was making a long railway journey one day, and when leaving the King's Cross railway station picked up a book to read on the way. It was a copy of 'Alton Locke,' in a cheap and popular edition, and I soon became absorbed in its pages. Many years indeed had passed since I first read 'Alton Locke' — since the far-off time when it startled so many novel-readers, and came with something like a shock upon the world in general. My study of 'Alton Locke' in the train that day seemed less like the re-perusal of a familiar book than like a return to an old half-forgotten existence. I read my own youth once again in the pages of that powerful, painful story. All the sensations came back to me which were fresh to my mind when I first read of the life through which the young tailor and poet had passed. It was not because in my youth I had any real knowledge of such trials and struggles as those which the young working-man and his class went through, for I had lived for the most part a breezy, healthy life in a city which had a river for its way in and a sea for its way out. But the story of 'Alton Locke' sprang out of conditions of existence which were made familiar to my youth by the reading of books and newspapers, by the accounts which came in every day of the terrible privations from which the

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working classes in London, and all great English cities, were suffering, and of the wild and passionate efforts which enthusiasts of all kinds were making to bring about a brighter day. The story of 'Alton Locke' was in the air, if I may thus describe it. Its time, too, coincided with the Irish National Movement of 1848, which had many sympathisers in most of the English towns, and I felt as I journeyed along in the train that it was not Kingsley's story I was reading, but a chapter of human life, and suffering, and passion, which had opened itself to me when I was only just growing into manhood. I became gradually conscious of defects in the structure and in the style of the book which I had not noticed when its pages were new to me, but I could not become critical, I could only remember; association and memory passed into the book, and it was like the hearing of some long unfamiliar piece of music which appeals to us rather by what it brings back with it than by anything in the strain itself.

Perhaps one could not speak more highly in praise of a work of fiction so far as one's own personal tribute can go, than to say that such were the emotions which it brought up, and if this is so I am well content, for it is not to my purpose to criticise 'Alton Locke,' but only to say something about the book itself, and about the man who wrote it. There can be no doubt that Charles Kingsley made himself a power in literature, not so much because he was really a great artist in fiction, as for the reason that he was able to interpret certain national feelings, and to illustrate certain class sufferings in a manner that compelled the sympathy of even the most alien reader. At the time which 'Alton Locke' describes, it seemed to some of us as if all the old political and social systems were in the way to be

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shattered, and as if the old civilisation was in a state of revolution. As a matter of fact there was political revolution aflame over the whole European Continent, and in Great Britain and Ireland there seemed to be something very like a political or social revolution, or both together. Kingsley took for his field of description the scenes of the Chartist agitation, and of the conditions which gave to that agitation its impulse and its reality.

When 'Alton Locke' was published the author was, to most boys in Great Britain who read books at all, a sort of living embodiment of chivalry, liberty, and a revolt against the established order of baseness and class oppression in so many spheres of our society. About the time when the book was published Kingsley delivered a sermon, in the country church where he officiated, so full of warm and passionate protest against the wrongs done to the poor by existing systems, that his spiritual chief, the rector or dean or some other dignitary, arose in the church itself—morally and physically arose, as Mrs. Gamp did—and denounced the preacher. Need it be said that the report of so unusual and extraordinary a scene as this, excited our youthful enthusiasm into a perfect flame for the minister of the State Church who had braved the public censure of his superior in the cause of human right? For a long time Charles Kingsley was our chosen hero—I am speaking of young men with the youthful spirit of revolt in them, with dreams of republics, and ideas about the equality of man. If I had been asked to describe Charles Kingsley at a date some twenty years later, having regard to the tendency of his writings and his public attitude then, how should I have spoken of him? First, as about the most perverse and wrongheaded supporter of every political

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abuse, the most dogmatic champion of every wrong cause in domestic and foreign politics that his time had produced. I hardly remember, in my practical observation of politics, a great public question of which Charles Kingsley did not take the wrong side. The vulgar glorification of mere strength and power — such a marked characteristic of modern public opinion — never had a louder-tongued votary than he. The apostle of liberty and equality, as he seemed to me in his early days, showed himself later, to my mind, as the champion of slave systems, of oppression, and the iron reign of mere force. Is this a paradox? Did the man undergo a wonderful change of opinions? It is not a paradox, and I do not think Charles Kingsley ever changed his views. Perhaps a short sketch of the man and his work may reconcile these seeming antagonisms, and make the reality coherent and clear.

I was present at a meeting some thirty years ago where Kingsley was one of the principal speakers. The meeting was held in London, the audience was a peculiarly 'Cockney' audience, and Charles Kingsley was personally little known to the public of the metropolis. Therefore, when he began to speak there was quite a little thrill of wonder, and something like incredulity, through the listening benches. Could that really be Charles Kingsley, the novelist — I heard people ask — the poet, the scholar, the aristocrat, the gentleman, the pulpit-orator, the 'soldier priest,' the apostle of muscular Christianity? Yes, that was indeed he. Rather tall, very angular, surprisingly awkward, with thin, staggering legs, a hatchet face adorned with scraggy gray whiskers, a faculty for falling into the most ungainly attitudes, and making the most hideous contortions of visage and frame; with a rough provincial accent

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and an uncouth way of speaking, which would be set down for caricature on the boards of a theatre; such was the appearance which the author of 'Glaucus' and 'Hypatia' presented to his startled audience. Since Brougham's time nothing so ungainly and eccentric had been displayed upon an English platform. Needless to say, Charles Kingsley had not the eloquence of Brougham; but he had a robust and energetic plain-speaking which soon struck home to the heart of the meeting. He conquered his audience. Those who, at first, could hardly keep from laughing: those who heartily disliked his general principles and his public attitude, were alike won over, long before he had finished, by his bluff and blunt earnestness and his transparent sincerity. The subject was one which concerned the social suffering of the poor. Kingsley approached it broadly and boldly, talking with a grand disregard for logic and political economy, sometimes startling the more squeamish of his audience by the Biblical frankness of his descriptions and his language; but, I think, convincing everyone that he was sound at heart, and explaining unconsciously to many how it happened that one endowed with sympathies so humane and liberal should so often have distinguished himself as the champion of the stupidest systems and the harshest oppressions. Anybody could see that the strong impelling force of the speaker's character was an emotional one; that sympathy and not reason, feeling rather than logic, instinct rather than observation, would govern his utterances. There are men in whom, no matter how robust and masculine their personal character, a disproportionate amount of what is cynically called the feminine element seems to have somehow found a place. These men will usually see things, not as they really are, but as they are reflected

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through some personal prejudice or emotion. They will generally spring to conclusions, obey sudden impulses and instincts, ignore evidence, and be very 'thorough' and sweeping in all their judgments. When they are right they are — like the young lady in the song — very, very good; but, like her, too, when they happen to be wrong they are 'horrid.' Of these men the author of 'Alton Locke' was a remarkable illustration. It seems odd to describe the expounder of the creed afterwards described as 'Muscular Christianity' as one endowed with too much of the feminine element. But for all his vigour of speech, and his rough voice, Charles Kingsley was as surely feminine in his way of reasoning, his likes and dislikes, his impulses and prejudices, as Harriet Martineau was masculine in her intellect, and George Sand in her emotions.

Charles Kingsley came of ancient English family, was very proud of his descent, and full of the conviction, so ostentatiously paraded by many, that good blood carries with it a warrant for bravery, justice, and truth. The Kingsleys were a Cheshire family; I believe they date from before the Conquest—it does not much matter. I shall not apply to them John Bright's epigram about families which came over with William the Conqueror, and never did anything else; for the Kingsleys seem to have been always an active race. They took an energetic part in the civil war during Charles the First's time, and stood by the Parliament. I was told, some years ago, that the family had in their possession a commission to raise a troop of horse, given to a Kingsley and signed by Oliver Cromwell. One of the family emigrated to the New World with the Pilgrim Fathers, and I believe the Kingsley line still flourishes there. Irrepressible energy, so far as I know, seems to have

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been always a characteristic of the household. Charles Kingsley was for a while a pupil of the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, son of the poet, and he finally studied at Magdalene College, Cambridge. Kingsley was originally intended for the legal profession, but he changed his mind, and went into the Church. His real existence began and developed under the guidance of a remarkable man, and under the inspiration of a remarkable movement. The man to whose leadership and teaching Kingsley owed so much was the Rev. Frederick Denison Maurice. It would be hardly possible to overrate the meaning and the extent of the influence which this eminent man exercised over a large field of English society. The life of Frederick Maurice infused new soul and sense into a whole generation. He was not a great speaker or a great thinker; he was not a bold reformer; he had not a very subtle intellect; I doubt if his writings will be much read in the coming times. He was simply a great character, a grand influence. He sent a new life into the languid and decaying frame of the State Church of England. He quickened it with a fresh sense of duty. His hope and purpose were to bring that Church into affectionate and living brotherhood with modern thought, work, and society. An early friend and companion of John Stirling (the two friends married two sisters), Maurice had all the sweetness and purity of Carlyle's hero, with a far greater intellectual strength. Maurice set himself to make the English Church a practical influence in modern thought and society. He did not believe in a religion sitting apart on the cold Olympian heights of dogmatic theology, and looking down with dignified disdain upon the common life and the vulgar toils of humanity. He held that a Church, if it is good for anything, ought to be able to

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meet the challenge of the sceptic and the infidel, and that it ought to concern itself about all that concerns men and women. One of the fruits of his long and valuable labour is the Working Men's College, first founded in Red Lion Square, an institution of which he became the Principal, and to which he devoted much of his time and attention. Only a few weeks before his death he presided at one of the public meetings of this his favourite institution. He was parent of the scheme of 'Christian Socialism,' which sprang into existence nearly half a century ago, and which is bearing fruit still — a scheme to set on foot co-operative associations among working-men on sound and progressive principles; to help the working-men by advances of capital, in order that they might thus be enabled to help themselves.

One of Maurice's earliest and most ardent pupils in this work was Charles Kingsley. Another was Thomas Hughes, whom most of us can well remember. I had an acquaintance with 'Tom' Hughes extending over many years, and we were associated in various political and social organisations. I remember hearing the late Sir James Stephen, in a public address, suggest that Englishmen ought to depose John Bull as a type of English national character, and set up in his place Tom Brown, the popular hero of Thomas Hughes's most successful story. Hughes was one of the few prominent Englishmen of good position who boldly and steadfastly championed the cause of the North and of the Union during the American Civil War. He received a splendid welcome in the Northern States when he visited America after the war, and I am satisfied that his influence had a great deal to do in maintaining peace between his own country and the American

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Republic at a most critical time. I had the honour of speaking in support of his candidature at some of the meetings on the South side of London when he stood for the borough of Lambeth, and was elected to represent it in the House of Commons. He never made much way in the House as a speaker, for his style in debate was curiously unlike what might have been expected from the creator of 'Tom Brown' and one of the apostles of 'Muscular Christianity.' His speaking had little fire and no passion in it: it was quiet, thoughtful, and argumentative. But the House always listened to him with close attention, as to a man who meant exactly what he said, and who had thoroughly mastered every subject on which he rose to offer his opinion.

Thomas Hughes and I had many friends in common, and for a long time we were in the habit of meeting often. During his later years, however, our political paths somewhat diverged. He had ceased to be a Member of the House of Commons; I had entered the House as an Irish Nationalist and Home Ruler, and Hughes was not in favour of Home Rule. The last time I saw him was at Royat, the French watering-place, whither we had both gone in quest of restoration to health. He died some years after, and with his death a striking and interesting personality passed out of English political and social movements. I may mention, perhaps, as a fact worth remembering, that Thomas Hughes was one of the founders of the Savile Club, which was originated by him and some of his friends with the object of making it a central meeting-place for Englishmen, for Americans, and for British Colonial subjects. I believe the Club has long since lost its original character, but this certainly was the

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main object which Thomas Hughes and his friends had in view when they called it into existence.

The Chartist movement was a strange jumble of politics and social complaints. It was partly the blind passionate protest of working-men who knew they had no right to starve and suffer in a prosperous country, but who hardly knew where the real grievance lay. It was partly the protest of untaught and eager intelligence against the brutal apathy of a Government which would do nothing for national education. Its political demands were very modest. Some of them have since been quietly carried into law — one or two of them have been quietly dismissed into the realm of anachronisms. Chartism was indeed rather a wild cry, a passionate yearning of lonely men for combination, than any definite political enterprise. One looks back now with a positive wonder upon the impolicy of the ruling classes which so nearly converted it into a rebellion. Of course it was in some instances seized hold of by selfish and scheming politicians, who played with it for their own purposes. Of course it had its evil counsellors, its false friends, its cowards, and its traitors. But on the whole there was a noble spirit of manly honesty pervading the movement which, to my mind, fills it with a romantic interest, and ought to secure for it an honourable memory. It found leaders in many cases outside its own classes. There was, for example, ‘Tom Duncombe,’ a sort of Alcibiades of English Radicalism; a brilliant talker in Parliament, a gay man of fashion, steeped deep in reckless debt and sparkling dissipation; hand and glove with the fast young noblemen of the West End gambling houses, and the ardent Chartist working-men of Shoreditch and Clerkenwell. There was Feargus O’Connor — huge, boisterous, fearless — a

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burlesque Mirabeau with red hair; a splendid mob-speaker, who could fight his way by sheer strength of muscle and fist through a hostile crowd; vain of his half-mythical descent from Irish kings, even when he delighted in being hail fellow well met with tailors and hod-carriers; revelling in the fiercest struggles of politics and the wildest freaks of dissipation. O'Connor tried to crowd half a dozen lives into one, and the natural result was that he prematurely broke down. For a long time before his death he was a mere lunatic. A strange fact was that, as his manners were always eccentric and boisterous, he had become an actual madman for months before those around him were fully aware of the change. In the House of Commons the freaks of the poor lunatic were for a long time supposed to be only more marked eccentricities, or, as some thought, insolent affectations of eccentricity. He would rise while Lord Palmerston was addressing the House, walk up to the great minister and give him a tremendous slap on the back. One night he actually assaulted a Member of the House, and the Speaker ordered his arrest. Feargus sauntered coolly out into the lobbies. The Sergeant-at-Arms was bidden to go forth and arrest the offender. Lord Charles Russell was then the Sergeant-at-Arms, and was a slight, rather delicate man. I have been told by some who witnessed it that the scene in the lobbies became highly amusing. Lord Charles went with reluctant steps about his awful task. By this time everybody was beginning to suspect that O'Connor was really a madman. Anyhow he was a giant, and at his sanest moments perfectly reckless. Now it is not a pleasant task for any ordinary man to be sent to arrest even a sane giant; but only think of laying hands on a giant who appeared to be

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out of his senses! The dignity of his office, however, had to be upheld, and Lord Charles followed quietly after his huge quarry. He cast anxious looks at member after member, but it was none of their business to interfere, and they had no inclination to volunteer. Some of them indeed were deeply engrossed in speculation as to what would happen if Feargus were suddenly to turn round. Would the Sergeant-at-Arms put his dignity in his pocket and actually run? Or, if he stood his ground, what would be the result? Happily, however, just as Feargus and his official pursuer reached Westminster Hall, the eager eye of Lord Charles Russell descried a little knot of policemen; he hailed them, they came up, and the Sergeant-at-Arms did his duty and the capture was effected. I can well remember seeing O'Connor, somewhere about this time, sauntering through Covent Garden market, with rolling, restless gait; his hair, that once was fiery red, all snowy white; his eyes gleaming with the peculiar, quick, shallow, ever-changing glitter of madness. The poor fellow rambled from fruit-stall to fruit-stall, talking all the while to himself, sometimes taking up a fruit as if he meant to buy it, and then putting it down with a vacant laugh and walking on. It was a pitiable spectacle. His light of reason soon flickered out altogether, and death came to his relief.

I must not omit to mention, when speaking of the Chartist leaders, the brave, disinterested, and highly-gifted Ernest Jones, who sacrificed such bright worldly prospects for the cause of the People's Charter. Long after the Charter and its agitation were dead, Jones emerged into public life again, still comparatively a young man, and he seemed about to enter on a career

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both brilliant and valuable. An immature and unexpected death interposed.

Charles Kingsley came to know the principal working-men among the Chartists, and his impulsive nature was greatly influenced by their words and lives. Most of their leaders drawn from other classes — O'Connor especially — he distrusted and disliked. But the rank and file of the movement, the working-men, the sufferers — the 'proletaires,' as they would be called nowadays — attracted his kindly heart. Chartism had fallen. It collapsed suddenly in 1848; died amid Homeric laughter of the public. It fell mainly because it had come to occupy a false position altogether. Partly by ignorance, partly by the selfish folly of some of its leaders, and partly by the severity of the Government measures, the movement had been driven into a dilemma which it had never originally contemplated. It must either go into open rebellion or surrender. Chartism had no real wish to rebel, although of course the flame of the recent revolution in Paris had glared over it and made it wild; it had no means of carrying on a revolt for a single day. So it could only surrender; and the surrender took place under conditions which made it seem utterly ridiculous. Kingsley was seized with the idea of crystallizing all this into a romance. He had as a further stimulant and guide the work which Henry Mayhew was then publishing, 'London Labour and the London Poor,' a serial which by its painful and startling revelations was working a profound impression on England. Mayhew's narratives were often inaccurate, for he could not conduct the whole enterprise himself, and had sometimes to call in the aid of less careful and trustworthy associates, who may occasionally have found it easier to throw off a bit of sensational or senti-

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mental romance, than to pursue a patient inquiry. But the general effect of the publication was healthful and practical, and it became the parent of nearly all the efforts that followed to lay bare and ameliorate the condition of the London poor. There can be no doubt it had a great influence on the impressionable mind of Charles Kingsley. He wrote 'Alton Locke,' and the book became a great success. The Tailor and Poet was the hero of the hour. A critic in 'Blackwood' at once christened 'Alton Locke' 'Young Remnants,' but Young Remnants survived the joke. The novel is full of nonsense and extravagance; and, with all its sympathy for tailors, it has a great deal of Kingsley's characteristic affection for rank and birth. But it had a really great idea at its heart, and struck out one or two new characters — especially that of the old Scotch book-seller — and made its mark.

I pass over the many books he produced between 'Alton Locke' and 'Westward Ho!' and I dwell upon the latter only because it illustrates the next great idea which got hold of the author after the little fever about Chartism had passed away. I suppose 'Westward Ho!' may be regarded as the first appearance of the school of Muscular Christianity. Kingsley started, for our benefit, the huge British hero who could do anything in the way of fighting and walking, and propagated the doctrines of the English Church. To read the Bible and kill the Spaniards was the whole duty of the ideal Briton of Elizabeth's time, according to this authority. The notion was a success. In a moment our literature became flooded with pious athletes who knocked their enemies down with texts from the Scriptures and left-handers from the shoulder. All these heroes were of necessity 'gentlemen.' One of the principal articles of

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the new gospel according to Kingsley was that truth, valour, muscle, and theological fervour were only possessed in their fulness by the scions of good old English county families. Other nations seldom had such qualities at all; never had them to perfection; and even favoured Britain only saw them properly illustrated in country gentlemen of long descent. Of course this sort of thing, which was for the moment a sincere idea with Kingsley, became a mere affectation among his followers and admirers. The fighting parson pattern of hero was for a while as great a bore as the rough and ugly hero after Jane Eyre's 'Rochester,' or the colossal and corrupt guardsman whom 'Guy Livingstone' sent abroad on the world. Certainly Kingsley's hero was a better style of man than Guy Livingstone's, for at the worst he was only an egotistical savage. But I think he did a good deal of harm in his day. He helped to encourage and inflate that feeling of national self-conceit which makes people such nuisances to their neighbours, and he fostered that odious reverence for mere force and power which Carlyle had already made fashionable. Kingsley himself appears to have become possessed by his own idea as if by some unmanageable spirit. It banished all his chartism and democracy and liberalism, and the rest of it. Under its influence Kingsley out-Carlyled Carlyle in the worship of strong despotisms and force of any kind. He went out of his way to excuse slavery in the Southern States. He became a fervent panegyrist of Governor Eyre of Jamaica. When two sides were possible to any question of human politics, he was sure to take the wrong one. I said this once to Kingsley himself, and he took it very good-humouredly. Nothing for long years, I think, has been more repulsive, and in its way more

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mischievous, than the cant about 'strength' which Kingsley did so much to diffuse and to glorify.

Meanwhile his irrepressible energy was always driving him into new fields of work. It never allowed him time to think. The moment any sort of idea struck him, he rushed at it and crushed it into the shape of a book or an essay. He wrote historical novels, philosophical novels, and theological novels. He wrote poetry, yards of poetry, volumes of poetry. There really was a great deal of the spirit of poetry in him, and he did better things with the hexameter verse than better poets have done. There was for a long time a fervid school of followers who swore by him, and would have it that he was to be the great English poet of the century. He published essays, tracts, lectures, and sermons without number. He seems to have made up his mind to publish in book form somehow everything that he had spoken or written anywhere. He inundated the leading newspapers with letters on this, that, and the other subject. He was appointed Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge on the death of Sir James Stephen, and he launched at once into a series of lectures, which were almost immediately published in book form. Why he published them it was hard for even vanity itself to explain, because, with characteristic bluntness, he began his course with the acknowledgment that he really knew nothing in particular about the subjects whereon he had undertaken to instruct the University and the world. He made up in courage, however, for anything he may have lacked in knowledge. He went bravely in for an onslaught on the positive theory of history — on Comte, Mill, Buckle, Darwin, and everybody else. He made it perfectly clear, very soon, that he did not even know

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what these authors professed to teach. He flatly denied that there is any such thing as an inexorable law in nature. He proved that even the supposed law of gravitation is not by any means the rigid and universal sort of thing that Newton and such-like persons have supposed. How, it may be asked, did he prove this? In the following words: 'If I choose to catch a stone, I can hold it in my hands; it has not fallen to the ground, and will not till I let it. So much for the inevitable action of the laws of gravity.' This way of dealing with the question may seem to many readers nothing better than downright buffoonery. But Kingsley was as grave as a church and as earnest as an owl. He felt quite certain that he was refuting the pedants who believe in the inevitable action of the law of gravitation, when he talked of holding a stone in his hand. That an impulsive, illogical man should on the spur of the moment talk this kind of nonsense, even from a professor's chair, is not perhaps wonderful; but it does seem a little surprising that he should see it in print, revise it, and publish it, without ever becoming aware of its absurdity.

In the same headlong spirit Kingsley rushed into his famous controversy with John Henry Newman. Newman had preached a sermon on 'Wisdom and Innocence.' Kingsley went out of his way to discourse and comment on this sermon, and publicly declared that its doctrine was an exhortation to disregard truth. 'Dr. Newman informs us that truth need not, and on the whole ought not, to be a virtue for its own sake.' Of course this was as grave a charge as could possibly be made against a great religious teacher. It was doubly offensive and odious to Newman because it was the revival of an old and familiar charge against the Church

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he had lately entered. It was made by Kingsley in an off-hand, careless sort of way, as if it were something acknowledged and indisputable — as if some one were to say, ‘John Morley is a follower of Gladstone,’ or ‘Arthur Balfour is inclined to make concessions with regard to Irish University Education.’ Newman wrote with a cold civility to ask in what passage of his writings any such doctrine was to be found. Of course nothing of the kind was to be found. If it were possible to conceive of any divine in our days holding such a doctrine, we may be perfectly certain that he would never put it into print. Newman was known to all the world as the purest and most austere devotee of what he believed to be the truth. He had sacrificed the most brilliant career in the Church of England for his convictions, and, strange to say, had yet retained the admiration and the affection of those whose religious fellowship he had renounced. Kingsley had but one course in fairness and common sense open to him. He ought to have frankly apologised. He ought to have owned that he had spoken without thinking; that he had blurted out words without observing the gravity of the charge they contained; and that he was sorry for it. But he did not do this. He published a letter in which he said that Dr. Newman having denied that his doctrine bore the meaning Mr. Kingsley had put upon it, he (Kingsley) could only express his regret at having mistaken him. This was nearly as bad as the first charge. It distinctly conveyed the idea that, but for Newman’s subsequent explanation and denial, certain words of his might fairly have been understood to bear the odious meaning ascribed to them. Newman returned to the charge with a chill urbanity which I cannot help thinking Kingsley mistook for weakness or

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fear. He pointed out that he had never denied anything — that there was nothing for him to deny; that Mr. Kingsley had charged him with teaching a certain odious doctrine, and he therefore asked Mr. Kingsley to show him the passage containing the doctrine, or frankly own there was no such passage in existence. Kingsley thereupon took the worst, the most unfair, and, as it proved, the most foolish course a man could possibly have pursued. He went to work to fasten on Newman by a constructive argument, drawn from the general tendency of his teaching, a belief in the doctrine of which he was unable to find any specific statement.

Then opened out that controversy, which was quite an event in its time, and set everybody talking. Newman's was an intellect which must be described as the peer of John Stuart Mill's or Herbert Spencer's. He was a perfect master of polemical science. He could write, when he thought fit, with a vitriolic keenness of sarcasm. When he had allowed Kingsley to entangle himself sufficiently, Newman fairly opened fire, and the rest of the debate was like a duel between some blundering, wrong-headed cudgel-player from a village green, and some accomplished professor of the science of the rapier from Paris or Vienna. Not the least amusing thing about the controversy was the manner in which it put Kingsley into open antagonism with his own teaching. He endeavoured gratuitously and absurdly to convict Dr. Newman of a disregard for the truth, because Newman believed in the miracles of the saints. For, he argued, a man of Newman's intellect could not believe in such things if he inquired into them. But he did not inquire into them; he taught that they were not to be questioned but accepted as orthodox. There-

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by he showed that he preferred orthodoxy to truth — ‘truth, the capital virtue, the virtue of virtues, without which all others are rotten.’ Now, that sounds very well, and we all agree in what Kingsley says of the truth. But Kingsley had, not long before, been assailing Bishop Colenso for his infidelity. Kingsley declared himself shocked at the publication of a work like Dr. Colenso’s, which claimed and exercised a license of inquiry that seemed to him ‘anything but reverent.’ He distinctly laid it down that the liberty of religious criticism must be ‘reverent,’ and ‘within the limits of orthodoxy’! It is perfectly obvious that if to limit inquiry within the bounds of orthodoxy shows a disregard for truth in John Henry Newman, the same practice must be evidence of a similar disregard in Charles Kingsley. Of course Kingsley never thought about this — never thought about the matter at all. He disliked Colenso’s teaching on the one hand and Newman’s on the other. He said the first thing that came into his mind against each in turn, and never heeded the fact that the reproach he employed in the former case was utterly inconsistent with that which he uttered in the latter. I do not believe, however, that the controversy did Kingsley any harm. Nobody ever expected consistency or methodical argument from him. People were amused, and laughed, and perhaps wondered why Newman should have taken any trouble in the matter at all. But Kingsley remained in popular estimation just the same as before — heedless, hot-headed, boisterous, but full of brilliant imagination and thoroughly sound at heart.

Thus Charles Kingsley was always at work. At one time he took to proclaiming the virtues of Australian potted meats. He threw his whole soul into the Aus-

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tralian meat question. The papers ran over with letters from him intended to prove to the world how good and cheap it was to eat mutton and beef brought in tin cans from Australia. I believe, however, that Kingsley acknowledged that all his energy and eloquence were unequal to the task of persuading his servants to eat the excellent food which he himself was willing to have at his table. He lectured on temperance, and also delivered a philippic against Darwin. He wrote, too, condemning and deprecating the modern critical spirit. He insisted there was one rule 'by which we should judge all human opinions, endeavours, characters.' That rule is, 'Are they trying to lessen the sum of human misery, of human ignorance? Are they trying, however clumsily, to cure physical suffering, weakness, deformity, disease, and to make human bodies what God would have them? . . . If so, let us judge them no further. Let them pass out of the pale of our criticism. Let their creed seem to us defective, their opinions fantastic, their means irrational. God must judge of that, not we. They are trying to do good; then they are children of the light.' This is not, perhaps, the spirit in which Kingsley himself criticised Newman or Colenso. But if we judge him according to the principle which he recommends, he would assuredly take a high rank; for I never heard anyone question his sincerity and his honest purpose to do good. Of course he was often terribly provoking. His almost hysterical impulsiveness, and his antiquated, feudal devotion to rank, were sometimes difficult to bear without strong language. His utter absence of sympathy with political emancipation was a lamentable weakness. But he had an honest heart, and tried to do the work of a man; and he was one of those who

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would, if they could, make the English State Church still a living, an active, and an all-pervading influence. As a preacher he often reminded me of Henry Ward Beecher. He was far below Beecher in all oratorical gifts as well as in political enlightenment; but he had the same perfervid and illogical nature, the same vigorous, self-sufficing temperament, the same tendency to 'slop over' — a familiar phrase of Beecher; the same generous energy in any cause that seemed to him good.

I knew Charles Kingsley's brother Henry very well for several years, and I had a strong personal regard for him. He made a distinct place for himself as a novelist, and he would have made that place on his own merits without any aid from his brother's popularity. Henry Kingsley was a journalist as well as a novelist, and at one time in his life was editor of an Edinburgh paper. At an earlier period of his existence, however, he had gone over to Australia and lived there for several years. I did not know him until after his return, and cannot tell whether he may have picked up some of his peculiar accent and his odd manners during a residence in the Australian bush. Nor could I ever feel quite certain whether the oddities of manner and peculiarities of accent were not deliberately adopted with some strange heroic idea of bearing personal testimony to the fact that a man was 'a man for a' that,' and that the ways of West End civilisation are not essential as a certificate of character to one of nature's gentlemen. Assuredly Henry Kingsley was a gentleman by birth, family, and training, but assuredly also he had a bluntness and roughness of speech which sometimes astonished and bewildered his newer acquaintances. Whether his manners were an accident or an affectation, it is certain that he had the heart and the spirit of a gentle-

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man, and that he was appreciated by all who really knew him. There was a distinct touch of something like genius in him, and although some of the critics were at first inclined to speak rather slightly of his work, his novels soon bore down adverse or disparaging criticism, and got hold of the public mind. Henry Kingsley was a critic himself, a very appreciative and generous critic. He was one of the very first to appreciate the merits of my dear friend William Black's novel 'A Daughter of Heth.' He thoroughly recognised the promise of the book before it bore the author's name on the titlepage. Not long after the authorship of the book became known I met him one evening at a London house where Black was one of the guests. He took my arm, and glancing towards Black, said, 'There's the novelist of the year, and of many years to come. I found that out before I knew who wrote the book, and I believe I was one of the very first to find it out.' I told Black what Kingsley had said, and I know it gave him sincere pleasure. The gifts of the Kingsley family are illustrated among the novels of the present generation as well as among those of the past. None of our later writers of fiction takes higher rank than that which has been won by Lucas Malet, the daughter of Charles Kingsley.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SOME MEMORIES OF THE STAGE

WE were a stage-stricken people in my native city of Cork. I associate the stage almost as distinctly with my earliest boyish recollections as I do the fields, the river, and the sea. We were something like one of the smaller German cities, so far as the stage was concerned; whatever we might do without, we could not do without our dramatic performances. We must have the famous actors and actresses to come and display themselves on the boards of our theatre. I remember after I had attained respectable middle age attending some of the theatrical representations in Weimar — Goethe's Weimar — and finding myself reminded somehow of the artistic interest taken in great dramas and great performers by my early fellow-citizens of Cork. I was taken to the theatre when only a child, and ever since that time I have seldom failed to visit a theatre whenever I had the chance.

As I never saw Edmund Kean, the first great actor made known to me was Macready. I can still remember his acting with perfect distinctness, and can amuse myself by mentally comparing his rendering of certain passages in 'Macbeth,' and in 'Lear,' with those of living actors at home and abroad, just as if I had seen Macready only the other day. I do not propose entering into any comparisons here between the living and

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the dead, and shall only give my memories of departed actors, just as they impressed me at the time, without endeavouring to raise any questions as to relative claims and merits. Macready never quite satisfied my youthful demands for genius and greatness in an actor. There were some passages in his 'Lear' and his 'Macbeth' which to my thinking could not be surpassed for dramatic pathos and power. The appeal that Lear makes to the heavens, 'for you yourselves are old;' Macbeth's outburst of futile regret over the withering of his life and of his hopes; to these and to many other such passages Macready gave a thrill and a force of emotion which might have satisfied Shakespeare himself by the measure of justice done to their expression. But, in general, Macready seemed to me too careful an actor — I do not know how I can otherwise convey my meaning — to carry his audience captive with him. The effect seemed almost always to be elaborately studied; the work carried marks of its study and its preparation along with it; it seldom seemed spontaneous. Of course I know very well that the finest outbursts of dramatic force displayed by an actor cannot often be spontaneous, and have for the most part to be studied with care; but then there are and have been actors who can deliver their most thrilling passages without any evidence of preparation, just as if they came instantaneously at one electric touch to the feelings and the nerves. Macready did not then appear to me to stand on a level with some of the great actors I had read of. I could not, even if I had such a power of description, describe Macready as Robert Browning once described Edmund Kean to me.

Phelps I remember rather as a great manager than as a great actor. In his theatre at Sadler's Wells he

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brought home the higher drama to all but the poorest classes in a region of London where anything like high-class acting or drama had been previously altogether unknown. In the days of Macready and Phelps some of the dramas of Sheridan Knowles still kept the stage. Virginius was accounted one of Macready's best performances, and I think there were persons then who regarded Sheridan Knowles, on the whole, as rather superior to Shakespeare. Both Macready and Phelps kept up some of Lord Byron's dramas. I have seen Macready play 'Werner,' and Phelps play the part of 'Marino Faliero — the Doge of Venice.' Phelps's delivery of the Doge's speech just before his execution was really a magnificent display of stage declamation. Later on a manager brought out at a London theatre Byron's 'Sardanapalus.' I do not suppose I should have thought the performance a great success in any case, but it was hopelessly spoilt from the first for me, because of the fact that the young, voluptuous, and daring monarch would persist in pronouncing the name of the lovely Ionian girl, Myrrha, as though it were but another title for a looking-glass — he would persist in calling her 'Mirror.' I was critical and fastidious in those days, my ear was not so well attuned to Cockney accent as it may have become since, and I could not endure Ionian 'Mirror.'

Only old playgoers with very good memories still bear in mind, I suppose, the name of Gustavus V. Brooke, yet Brooke made a great success, for a time, and carried the London public completely with him, although he never completely captivated the critics. He made his first appearance in the Olympic theatre, and that first appearance was, in its way, a theatric event. Nature, I think, had done too much for Brooke

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in the first instance. His career seemed to me to be something like that of the thriftless young heir in 'Gil Blas,' who, on coming into his inheritance, finds it so large that he tells himself it would be impossible to get through it, and so goes to work and gets through it in double quick time. Brooke was a singularly handsome man with a splendid figure, the very model of strength and grace, and with a magnificent voice, the deeper notes of which were perfect music in themselves. At one time Brooke seemed to think that it was enough for him to repeat a few lines in those deep thrilling tones in order to extract from the audience the fullest sympathy that the whole dramatic situation could demand. His figure, his gestures, and his movements seemed sometimes to be used only in order to make a living statuary exhibition. Before he had gone through anything like the full working lifetime of an ordinary man Brooke had overtaxed his strength and his voice; he took no care of his splendid constitution, and a severe prolonged bronchial trouble made it seem doubtful whether his tones could ever recover their music. He was never an intellectual or even a thoughtful actor, his inclination seemed to be to squander rather than to cultivate his resources, and he came down lower and lower. Perhaps nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it, for he died gallantly on a wrecked vessel bound for Australia, having used the latest resources of his athletic strength in trying to save the lives of women and children, and refusing to make any attempt to burden, with his additional weight, the already overcrowded boats. He died somewhat as Eliot Warburton, the gifted author of 'The Crescent and the Cross,' died in the wreck of a vessel bound for Panama. Brooke threw most of his splendid gifts away, and one might

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say, to employ a melancholy metaphor, that his name was written on water. Yet there were two or three parts in which it would have been hard indeed to excel him. Some years ago I found myself in full accordance with the opinion of Sir Squire Bancroft and of Edmund Yates, in published works bearing the names of either author, and written quite independently of each other — the opinion that no English actor of modern times had ever given to the stage so splendid a representation of ‘Othello’ as that which Brooke gave in his brighter days. I should be inclined to put Brooke’s impersonation of Sir Giles Overreach, in Massinger’s ‘A New Way to Pay Old Debts,’ on a level with his Othello. Brooke was one of the last of the tragedians who occasionally played broad comedy, buffoon comedy, as well as the classic drama. His rendering of the ‘Irish Attorney’ was one of the most rattling pieces of old-fashioned Irish drollery that I have ever seen. Sometimes he went so far as to play a part in a screaming Irish farce after the curtain had fallen on his representation of one of Shakespeare’s heroes. It was still the custom, in those far-off days, to give the audience a roaring farce after a thrilling tragedy, and even great actors would now and then condescend to take the leading part in both performances. The world of artistic drama has surely gained much by the practical abolition of this odious idea of giving the audience full value for their money.

Charles Kean I saw in most of his performances. I saw many of his great Shakespearean revivals, as they were called, at the Princess’s Theatre in the early fifties. I have a painfully distinct recollection even still of the first Shakespearean revival at which I had an opportunity of being present. I had come up to

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London on a short holiday visit, I had very little money, and wanted to do all that I possibly could in the way of sight-seeing. I had taken up my abode in a queer little hotel much frequented by somewhat needy gentlemen from the European continent, and the hotel stood behind the Mansion House. The progress of modern improvement I dare say has removed all trace of that little hotel these many years back, but the distance between the Mansion House and the Princess's Theatre remains unchanged by the hand of time, and no one will deny that the walk from the one place to the other is a good long stretch. I had made up my mind to go to the Princess's on one particular night, and early that very day, as adverse destiny would have it, I found that my boots were giving out, and that I must buy a new pair in order to make a decent appearance at any theatre. So I bought a new pair of boots and left my old pair to be mended, and I started in my new boots on my day's work of sight-seeing. By the time I got back to my early dinner at the Mansion House — I had to go back to my hotel in the city, for I was in anxious expectancy of a letter there with a remittance — I discovered that my boots were somewhat tight and very hard, and that my feet had swollen in them. No remittance whatever had arrived, and none could come until the next morning. I had no friend from whom I could borrow that night, even if I had been disposed to reveal my hard-up condition, and so I made up my mind to walk to the Princess's Theatre, and to walk home again. Not David Copperfield, as he dragged his stony-hearted boots over the roads on that day of pleasuring so memorable to him, could have felt the pangs of foot-soreness more than I did as I dragged my stony-hearted boots along Cheapside, and

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Holborn, and Oxford Street that night. The physical sufferings, however, I accounted as nothing in the fixity of my determination to see the Shakespearean revival at the Princess's or perish in the attempt. Nor was the heroic agony all over when I reached the portico of the theatre, for I used to go to the pit in those days, and was, indeed, only too glad to get there, and I had to stand for a time at the pit door in the thick of a crowd before I had any chance of getting into the theatre. I never seemed to have known before what a faculty of swelling was contained in the human foot, and what a strength of resistance was embodied in the human boot. When at last I did get into the theatre, and with audacious, unmannerly struggles secured a seat in the pit, my first thoughts were not of Shakespeare, not of the Shakespearean revival, not of 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' the piece for the evening, not of dramatic critics, not of scenic art, but only that at last, at last! I had found a place where I could sit down and rest my feet! Gradually, however, the pain in my feet subsided, or perhaps I had better put it, my feet themselves subsided for the time, and at last the curtain drew up and the Athenian story began to unfold itself. Perhaps it was some lingering impression of discomfort in the overtasked feet, but certainly I was not quite able to yield myself to the full magic of the Shakespearean revival. There seemed to be rather too much revival and not enough Shakespearean in it for my youthful taste. I had read the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' too often, had dreamed over the dream too often, to be able altogether to recognise it in all the scenic reality of this elaborate presentation. I could not recognise Theseus and the Amazon Queen amid the temples and the marbles of an Athens which seemed to

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me to have been modelled after the fashion of the days of Pericles. Need it be said that the more carefully the scenery and the lime-light helped to show off the forest, and the hills, and the waters of the Greek Peninsula, the less and less could I fit in the humours of Bottom the Weaver, and Snug the Joiner, with the surroundings which the art of the scene painter had given to the whole show?

So it was indeed with all those Shakespearean revivals, so far as my unskilled judgment went; the over-mastering skill of the stage manager seemed to paint the picture out. The Banquet Hall in 'Macbeth,' the street scenes in 'Richard III.,' the stately processions with the correctness of all the costumes vouched for by antiquarian research, — all these seemed to me as if they were designed to bury Shakespeare, not to praise him. Each night was a night of magnificent show, but I think I should have enjoyed it better if it had been all show and no Shakespeare. Even the critics who went into raptures over the mounting of each play expended their admiration chiefly on the mounting, and had little to say about the acting. Some of the critics did not even find much to say in praise of the gorgeous historic scenery and setting. George Henry Lewes, for instance, who wrote under the signature of 'Vivian,' used to revel in amusing satire and cynicism over the gorgeous stage display and the guaranteed historical accuracy. I think the gorgeous stage effects would have diverted attention from the acting of Roscius, Garrick, Edmund Kean, and Talma, if these four could have played together in any one of the Shakespearean revivals. It would have been an unspeakable relief to see some really great actor performing 'Macbeth' or 'Othello' on a stage as bare as that which satisfied the

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days of Queen Elizabeth. Charles Kean was not in any sense a great actor. Some scenes of 'Richard III.' he played with an intensity which carried the beholders away, and, as Louis the Eleventh, he would have won a high place on any stage; but he was wanting in genuine passion and poetic feeling, and he had not the command and the dignity which at all times belonged to Macready. Mrs. Charles Kean, who had been Miss Ellen Tree, was a charming actress, graceful, tender, sometimes exquisitely pathetic, and occasionally striking a note of true passion; but my memory does not picture her to me as a great actress in any sense. Helen Faucit was, according to my judgment, the best Shakespearean actress of that day; but, although my years ought to compel me to be a *laudator temporis acti me puero*, I think we could show a better Shakespearean actress on our stage at present. Miss Faucit certainly did not, as the old proverbial saying would express it, 'wear out her welcome' on the stage. Her charms as an actress, especially of Shakespearean parts, had not begun to give the slightest signs of waning when she gave up the stage altogether as a profession, and settled down to a happy married life as the wife of Sir Theodore Martin. So far were her powers from showing any falling off at the time when she formally gave up the stage, that when, many years after, she appeared for once on the London boards in aid of some charitable enterprise, she delighted an audience, many of whom had never seen her before, by her thrilling performance of Rosalind. I had the honour of meeting her, much more lately still, in private society, and felt the deepest interest in her delightful talk about the drama of the past and of the present. Every new play, and every new actor or actress, were spoken of by her

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with an animation and a sympathy which showed that her heart was still with the triumphs of that profession which she had quitted only too soon for the public.

The invasion of the Lyceum Theatre and of London by Charles Fechter created a sensation, which for the time made a positive epoch in the story of the English stage. Only think of the courage of a Frenchman who actually ventured to come over to London in order to teach us how 'Hamlet' ought to be played! I remember having been told, at the time, by some who were in a position to know, that as the hour for his first performance of 'Hamlet' was approaching, Fechter's venturesome heart almost gave way. He was stricken with anticipatory stage-fright, and implored of his manager to get Phelps or anyone to assume the part and let the foreigner go. It is needless to say that the manager would not let the foreigner go, and Fechter had to face the music, and there could be no possible doubt that he accomplished a great success. His 'Hamlet' was from first to last a novelty for the English stage. It was a novelty even to the critics, although many of them must have known that a fair-haired 'Hamlet' was not an original conception on Fechter's part. Fechter's countryman, Paul Delaroche, had painted a fair-haired Hamlet, and had pictured him in the Churchyard scene seated on a tombstone, clasping with his hands one knee which was crossed over the other, and conversing in easy fashion with the immortal Gravedigger. The whole question of the fair-haired 'Hamlet' had, moreover, been raised and fully discussed by Goethe in 'Wilhelm Meister,' and the world had long been growing into a recognition of the fact that Goethe was Shakespeare's most appreciative critic. Fechter, therefore, consciously or unconsciously, moulded his fair-

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haired Hamlet on the lines described by Goethe, and gave him, along with the dreaming, musing melancholy of the Northern clime, the quick, sudden outbursts of rage which are the characteristic of the Berserker. All the long-drawn solemnity and pomposity of the Kemble school was banished from Fechter's Hamlet; each soliloquy was but Hamlet thinking aloud, not a tragedian rolling his funereal declamations over the heads of his audience. The colour of Hamlet's hair will probably remain an open question, but the sepulchral Hamlet, the glorified undertaker presented as Hamlet, may be assumed to have had his day. For a while there was even rather an inclination to make Hamlet a little too easy, familiar, and colloquial in manner. Some years ago an eminent actor was about to try 'Hamlet' for the first time. On the eve of the experiment he chanced to meet in Pall Mall my old friend Edward F. S. Pigott, late Examiner of Plays. Pigott asked him what he was going to do with Hamlet.

'Well,' replied the actor, 'I think I shall take him quite off the stilts.'

'Very good,' replied Pigott, 'but see that you don't land him in the gutter.'

The actor certainly did not land his hero in the gutter, but he took most of the dramatic dignity out of him, and converted him occasionally into what might fairly be described as the chatterbox Hamlet. This, I need hardly say, was long before my friend Mr. Johnston Forbes Robertson had given to the English stage his picturesque, poetic, impassioned, and yet thoroughly human, Hamlet. I think the one passage in Fechter's Hamlet which impressed me most deeply was that which follows immediately after the slaying of the King. Then Fechter suddenly turned to the audience

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and rushed towards the front of the stage waving the blood-stained sword in one hand, flinging the other hand wildly towards heaven, tossing his hair, and wearing all the outward semblance of an Orestes who has done his fate-appointed work, and is pursued by the Furies. I do not think I have ever seen an audience more completely electrified than was Fechter's audience at this crowning moment of the action.

Of course Fechter's foreign accent was much against him, and it may perhaps be doubted whether complete artistic success would be possible with such a disadvantage. Some of the comic papers made fun of Fechter's pronunciation to the end, and there were moments in every play when it grated harshly on the ear. I have certainly heard Frenchmen and other strangers who spoke English with a much better accent than Fechter ever acquired. It was the proof of Fechter's genius that he actually did triumph over this pervading defect, and that there were times in each play when the audience were so completely carried away as to forget it altogether.

When I first came to know London theatres there was one light comedian who certainly had no rival on the stage, and to whom the future of the English theatre is not, I think, likely to give a superior. Of course I am speaking of Charles Mathews. I am not able to picture in my fancy any light comedian who could be superior to Charles Mathews in Mathews's favourite parts. What was the essence of that marvellous gift of humour which could keep the whole house alive with laughter by touches the lightest, the most delicate, sometimes only just perceptible? The broadest comedians of the day — Buckstone, Wright, Paul Bedford — with whatever delightful drolleries of

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gesture and mannerism, could not make one laugh as much as Charles Mathews could do without using one single gesture which might seem out of character in an ordinary drawing-room. Charles Mathews had his touches of broad farce too, as in his '*Patter versus Clatter*,' and his '*Cool as a Cucumber*'; he had his extraordinary mimetic gifts and his marvellous faculty for acquiring an entirely new face without any assistance from artificial make-up, and in fact he could be as amusing a broad comedian as any other when he wanted to assume the part. But by far the best things he ever did were those in which he relied for the highest force of his comedy on no trick of manner, no oddity of gesture, no buffoonery of any kind; but was able to keep the whole theatre in continuous laughter while still retaining the outward appearance, and movements and manner, of an ordinary Englishman in ordinary society. I have seen Mathews's own company, in some of his quietest impersonations, actually checked in their performance and convulsed with laughter again and again by some indescribable touch of humour brought into play for the first time, so slight that one might think it would have passed over unnoticed, yet so irresistible that it upset the gravity of every one in the house.

I remember hearing a serious argument once maintained among some authors and dramatic critics on the amazing question whether Charles Mathews was a great artist at all. How, do my readers think, did this curious proposition come to be argued? It came about in this way. Some of the company seriously maintained that Mathews was not an artist because he was just as amusing in private life as he could be on the boards; because it came without any effort to him to be a wit and a humorist, and to rattle off his witty and humorous say-

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ings in a manner that made them irresistibly comic; because he had, in fact, an inborn gift of comedy, and therefore could not be called an artist, inasmuch as he was always only the same Charles Mathews in private and in public. I do not present the argument as one calling for grave critical consideration, I only give it as an illustration of the manner in which Charles Mathews was a problem to some of his contemporaries. The skill with which Mathews could at a moment alter the whole appearance and apparently the whole construction of his face he inherited, no doubt, from his father, the elder Charles Mathews. In some of his more farcical pieces he gazed at the audience with one face, then turned his back for a moment and instantly reappeared with a countenance bearing not the slightest resemblance to that which he had just before presented to the house. His mimicry of tones was as remarkable as his changes of feature. I heard, many years ago, an extraordinary story about a trick played by Mathews under conditions which one would have thought must have made detection certain. I cannot venture to say that there may not have been some exaggeration in the story, for I myself was not present at the incident which it describes; but it was certainly told to me as a simple fact, without exaggeration, and told by one who did not suppose that I could see any good reason for questioning its accuracy. The friend who told me the story was Leicester Buckingham, a distinguished dramatic author and critic, long since dead. Buckingham told me that he had an appointment one evening to meet Charles Mathews at the Lyceum Theatre not very long before the beginning of the performance. He went to the theatre and made his way into Mathews's dressing-room, and there he found, not Mathews, but, as he fully believed, his old friend

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Albert Smith. They shook hands and talked together on various subjects, Buckingham not having the faintest reason to feel any doubt as to the identity of his friend. After a while, however, a certain impatience began to make itself manifest on the faces of both men. Each explained that he had an appointment to meet Charles Mathews at that time and place, and each began to wonder what had become of Mathews. Buckingham at last said that he could not wait any longer, and would have to go away. Albert Smith pressed him to stay a little longer; Buckingham shook his head and stretched out his hand in token of farewell. Albert Smith took the hand, held it in his, and said: 'Just wait one moment; perhaps Mathews will appear after all.' Then with the other hand he plucked away the false beard, while he brought his face to its natural outlines, laughed his own peculiar sharp, metallic little laugh, and behold there stood Charles Mathews, only a little late for his appointment!

Mathews was in private life a wit and a marvellous talker. He was a man of education and culture, had in his early days been much in the companionship of Count D'Orsay and Lady Blessington, and had mixed in the brightest society at home and on the Continent. I remember seeing the walls of Paris decorated with announcements of his appearance in a comedy translated into French by himself. It was the familiar piece 'Cool as a Cucumber,' which Mathews converted into 'Un Anglais Timide.' Mathews of course played the audacious, reckless, rattlepate hero of the piece, who is going about the world to cure himself of a sort of morbid shyness, as he describes it. 'But,' as he frequently informs society in general, 'I'm better now.' Jules Janin, the famous French critic, did full justice to Mathews's bril-

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liant acting, and only found one fault with the performance, a fault-finding which certainly could not have greatly wounded the sensibilities of the actor. This one only fault was, the critic observed, that Mathews spoke French with far too good a Parisian accent for any ordinary Englishman. I remember once visiting Mathews in his dressing-room at the Lyceum on an unlucky occasion, when there happened to be a quarrel going on between two ladies of his company. The ladies were having the quarrel out before Mathews, who was doing his best by sweet reasonableness and adroit blandishment to compose the strife. At last the managerial influence prevailed, some sort of settlement or suspension of hostilities was effected, and the ladies flounced off on their different ways. Then Mathews turned to me with a glance of indescribable humour; 'My dear young friend,' he said, 'if women were only as reasonable as men, what a paradise this earth would be! But then, you see, the dear creatures, even when they do happen to be right, they are sure to be right in a wrong sort of way.'

The first appearance of Frederick Robson at the Olympic, in 1853, was an event in the history of the English stage. Robson had been an obscure provincial actor up to the time of his first appearance at the Olympic, and from that moment his renown was made. He was a school of acting all to himself. He never had a predecessor, and, thus far at least, he has not had a successor. In order to describe him by any distinctive title, one would have to classify him, I suppose, as chiefly a burlesque actor. But to speak of Robson as a burlesque actor would give as little idea of his powers as might be given of Robert Burns if one were to call him a Scotch ballad singer, or as a neat biographical diction-

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ary, which I once possessed, gave of Julius Cæsar, when it disposed of him by telling its students that he was a distinguished Roman officer. Robson's burlesque was tragedy and comedy; savage passion, and broad buffoonery; pathos, and pity, and terror, all struggling in convulsion together. There were sudden outbursts of passion which made the gazer feel for the moment as if he had never seen such fierce tragedy before; there were evanescent gleams of the tenderest pity and pathos; there was the very extravagance of broad comedy; and the one mood succeeded the other with an effect which sometimes left the audience in positive bewilderment. Sometimes the awkward, ill-shaped little body appeared to be positively shaken throughout by terror, or hate, or grief, or passion of some kind, and the actor seemed like one in demoniac possession, and the spectator found it almost too painful a sight; and then, in another instant, that same spectator was rolling in his seat utterly unable to control his bursts of laughter. Some of the dramatic critics of that day firmly maintained the position that if Robson chose to turn his attention to genuine tragedy he would have made the greatest tragic actor our stage had ever seen since the days of Edmund Kean. Those who saw Robson at the zenith of his success could well understand this theory, even though they could not accept it any more than I could. Recalling with perfect distinctness what I saw of Robson at that time, I can positively say that some of his sudden outbursts of passion and of pathos were not surpassed in moving power by anything that I have seen in tragic acting at home or abroad. But I suppose we may assume that Robson's genius was not made for long sustained tragic effort, otherwise he would undoubtedly have been one of the greatest tragic actors ever seen

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upon any stage. His genius was essentially fitful; by which, however, I do not mean to say that it only showed itself by fits and starts, according as the humour took him, that he could be a great actor in one part of a play and an inferior actor in another, or that his powers only came to him by fits and starts. I mean nothing of the kind. My conviction is that nature had given to Robson, not the genius of long sustained tragedy, or of long sustained comedy, but the extraordinary and perhaps unique faculty of sending forth flashes of the tragic and flashes of the comic in constantly recurring succession. When he appeared in a burlesque version of a great Italian actress's 'Medea,' the actress herself went to see his performance, and not only admitted that, in certain passages, it was a magnificent reproduction of her best tragic efforts, but actually adopted Robson's purely pathetic rendering of one thrilling line in preference to her own original rendering, which had been the expression of jealous anger. Robson played the leading part in some pieces which were not burlesque, but were a peculiar kind of comedy or melodrama suited to display his own singular style of acting, and therefore rich in effects which brought out his sudden changes of mood from the tragic to the comic, from irresistible mirth to something like madness. His London career was comparatively short. I suppose the truth is that his sudden success was too much for him. He took little care of the magnificent powers which had placed him above rivalry in his own line, and he must have been always wanting in physical resources. One remembers him as some strange goblin-like apparition, which was seen above the horizon for a while at the hour of black vespers pageants, and then was seen no more. But those who can remember him, as I can, will

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say that his extraordinary acting bears the most critical examination memory can give to it, and that Robson was a man of genius and a great artist.

Charlotte Cushman was a foreign invader who, like Fechter, invaded and captured the English stage and the English public. Miss Cushman was a tall young woman, of singularly masculine build and appearance, with a broad forehead and an expressive face, which had, however, little pretension to beauty, except the possession of a pair of eyes which shone with a penetrating and ever varying lustre. She had a rich, deep-toned voice, capable of every variety of musical expression. Miss Cushman understood her physical limitations perfectly well, and hardly ever attempted to play the ordinary stage heroine. Even when she took the part of Lady Macbeth her appearance was somewhat too masculine, and it required a very robust and commanding Macbeth indeed not to be 'overcrowded' from first to last by her masterful presence and bearing. She was indeed magnificent in Milman's 'Fazio,' and I have never seen her equal in the part of Meg Merrilies, the principal character in a dramatic version of Walter Scott's 'Guy Mannering.' The romantic novel was curiously twisted and tortured to make an acting play, the chief interest of which centred in Meg Merrilies the gypsy, and a more blood-curdling, uncanny, gypsy woman than Charlotte Cushman's Meg Merrilies it would be hardly possible to conceive. The part was a mere *tour de force*, but it was such a *tour de force* as only Charlotte Cushman could have accomplished. The chief success of the actress, however, was achieved in the performance of purely masculine parts, and most of all, perhaps, in the character of 'Romeo.' The London public was at first

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almost shocked at the idea of a woman undertaking the part of Romeo, and anyone might have said in advance that any such undertaking must have needs proved a failure. Yet after Charlotte Cushman's first appearance in this character the question was settled. The success was beyond dispute ; it was simply a matter of fact, which criticism could not ignore and could hardly even minimise. One might have entered the theatre with a mind fully prepossessed against the idea of any woman attempting to give us Shakespeare's Romeo, and yet before he had followed the actress for ten minutes he found himself taken captive by her extraordinary dramatic power. He forgot that she was an actress, forgot that she was not merely a woman, but a woman with an American accent, forgot everything but that she set before him the Romeo of his imagination and of Shakespeare. James Sheridan Knowles, the popular dramatic author, declared that her acting of the passage in which Romeo flings himself upon the ground, 'taking the measure of an unmade grave,' was equal to the finest outburst of passion and grief in Edmund Kean's 'Othello.' For myself I can say I have never heard greater expression given to the very soul of human feeling than was conveyed by Charlotte Cushman, in a few words spoken in the churchyard scene, where Paris breaks in upon Romeo as he is about to force open the door of the Capulet monument. 'Obey and go with me,' says Paris, 'for thou must die.' And Romeo, looking round upon him, makes answer: 'I must, indeed ; and therefore came I hither.'

The whole tragedy of the hour was told by these words spoken in that tone. The whole story of a despair which by reason of its very desperation is suffused with a certain sweetness of submission, and fore-

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shadows a certain companionship of doom for him and for the intruder whose hand is 'writ with me in sour misfortune's book,' the state of mind which recognises that the bitterness of death is past, and knows no further rage or hatred; all this was exquisitely told in every breathing of that thrilling voice. No one, I think, who heard Miss Cushman speak that line will ever forget the magic of the impression wrought by her full interpretation of its poetic human meaning. I have seen one other Romeo on the English stage, in later days than those of Miss Cushman, my friend Forbes Robertson, but I have certainly seen only one Claude Melnotte that was to me in any sense endurable, and that was Charlotte Cushman's presentation of the part. The hero of the 'Lady of Lyons' seems to me so insufferably stagy a person, his sentiments are all so inhumanly exalted, his speeches are all so hopelessly artificial, that if one were only to know the piece by reading it he might almost make up his mind that the better the actor the more ridiculous would be the Claude Melnotte. This, however, was not so in the instance of Miss Cushman. She created for me the only human, the only possible, and the only endurable Claude Melnotte I have ever seen.

This could not be due merely to the fact that Charlotte Cushman had great dramatic genius, for I have seen Claude Melnotte played by many great actors from Macready to Sir Henry Irving. I think something must have been due to the mere fact that Charlotte Cushman was a woman, and therefore, for all her masculine presence, was able to infuse something womanish into the passion and heroics of poor Claude Melnotte which lent a greater semblance of reality to his unreal declamations. But this was certainly not the whole of the secret. Miss

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Cushman did by the force of mere dramatic mastery contrive to make Claude Melnotte's rantings appear for the moment the natural expression of the man's feelings. There is a scene in the earlier part of the play where the hero's mother comes in and finds Claude engaged in painting from memory the portrait of his adored one, the unapproachable Lady of Lyons. The mother remonstrates with him after the simple and tender fashion of melodramatic mothers, and asks him why he wastes his time in dreaming, and painting, and writing verses to a woman who never thinks of him. Then Claude replies, with some words of lofty eloquence, which it would be hopeless for me to attempt to reproduce, but which begin with the question: 'Do the stars think of us?' and then goes on to argue that nevertheless we may gaze on them. Now the great actors whom I have seen playing the part always seemed to feel bound to rise to the full height of the melodramatic situation, and accordingly declaimed Claude Melnotte's words with a grandeur worthy of the hero and the hour. But Miss Cushman did nothing of the kind. Without starting from her seat to give full stage effect to the declamation, she merely glanced over her shoulder at the mother Melnotte, and put her questions in a sweet, half playful, half melancholy tone, as of one who knows his own weakness, and is not prepared to make any solemn argumentative stand in its defence, but tenderly caresses it, feeling that he cannot part with it, and would not if he could. This kind of note ran through the whole performance, and pleaded humanly for even its most stilted passages. I am afraid that no dramatic power could quite reconcile me to Claude Melnotte; but I pay my tribute to the genius of Charlotte Cushman when I say that she actually, for the time of each performance,

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made Claude Melnotte seem to me a possible human creature. Miss Cushman, during her first appearances in England, had a companion actress in her sister Susan Cushman, who used to play Juliet to Charlotte's Romeo. The younger sister played with sweetness and grace, and gave every promise of a bright dramatic career. But she soon got married to a distinguished chemist, Dr. Sheridan Muspratt, of Liverpool, and, as Mary Anderson did in later days, she gave up the stage and settled into private life. Nor did Charlotte Cushman herself ever lag, like Dr. Johnson's veteran, superfluous on the stage. She died indeed at a time when she might reasonably have hoped for long years and happy life.

Yet another foreign invasion, which will always be remembered in the history of the English stage, was that which Joseph Jefferson successfully accomplished when he appeared for the first time at the Adelphi as 'Rip Van Winkle.' Jefferson had made his mark in his native country of America, and likewise in Australia; but I am afraid that when he was announced to appear at the Adelphi his name conveyed to the ordinary Londoner no manner of idea. There were some of the critics even who did not know much about him, and I remember well that one or two critics whom I asked could give me no more precise information than was contained in the reply that Jefferson was some American or other, and that a certain manager thought no end of him. The morning after Jefferson's first appearance all the leading London newspapers had only one opinion about him. The critics and the public were absolutely in accord. Everybody declared that a more perfect piece of acting, quiet, comic, pathetic humour was not to be seen on any stage. I have no intention of entering into any panegyric on the performance, which must be still fresh in the memory of

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all playgoers approaching to middle age. Personally I have only one complaint to make of Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle, and that is, the selfish complaint that it never allowed me a chance of seeing Jefferson in any other part. He did on some very rare occasions appear in this or that other character, but on those rare occasions I happened to be either out of London or occupied in some way which cut me off from playgoing, and the result was that often as I have seen Jefferson I never saw him but either as himself or as Rip Van Winkle. I have been told that his acting of Mercutio was a performance in the finest spirit of the Shakespearean drama, and I can well believe it. But the London public, like the public of other cities, could not have enough of Rip Van Winkle, and Jefferson was therefore compelled to remain only Rip Van Winkle for by far the greater portion of his career on the stage. A lady, a friend of mine, took her little son, a boy of ten, to see Rip Van Winkle at a matinée in London. Some of the pathetic passages were too much for the little man's feelings, but he was quite too manly to admit that he could give way to feminine emotions. 'Mamma,' he stammered out, 'I think I must be getting a bad cold.' 'Never mind, my dear,' his mamma quietly replied, 'people get that sort of cold very often when they come to see Mr. Jefferson in this play.' So we did, I can testify, all of us. That cold was very catching in London when Jefferson played Rip Van Winkle.

Of the great comic actors — I mean the actors of broad comedy, who delighted audiences during my early visits to London theatres — none has left on me, I think, so abiding an impression of broad comic humour as dear old Keeley. Nobody could have had more perfectly than he the art which conceals art in producing his happiest

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effects. I can still sit and think over some of the parts I saw Keeley play, and find a positive delight in recalling the manner in which he could picture a thoroughly dull, respectable, stupid man, suddenly compelled to some unexpected wave of thought which rises up within him and will not be suppressed. The spectator saw him struggling with the portentous birth of this new idea. The face at first had all the dense stolidity of a countenance moulded in lead, or let us say, in putty. Then the forehead began to admit the existence of lines, and the eyelids became puckered, and the lips were pursed, and gradually a struggling gleam of expression came into the eyes, and the gazer was able to trace the dawn of an idea — a positive idea — in those reluctant eyes. There was nothing of exaggeration in this exhibition of the struggle between matter and mind that might be called hardly less material than matter; the process of the struggle was not marked by demonstrative gestures of any kind — there were no grins, or winks, or facial contortions; only you were enabled to trace the slow movement of the idea from the clogged brain into the bemused eyes, and at last into the poor man's lips and speech. Of course Keeley played all sorts of parts, and everything was played in the best style of quiet yet broad comedy. But it was when he had to do with a part admitting of such a demonstration as that which I have endeavoured to describe that Keeley was most himself, was most intensely and characteristically Keeley. I have often thought to myself what a brain a man must have, what a creative intellect he must have, to realise thus the abstract conception of utter stupidity becoming in labour with an idea, and what a dramatic skill he must have to put such a conception into full form and living expression. Not a long time before her death I

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met Mrs. Keeley at a garden-party in the Chelsea region of London, and was delighted to find that her manner still retained some of that vivacity which lent such unspeakable charm to her acting in the days when the oldest among us were only entering on life, and when that life could find no more delightful way of spending an evening than in going to the theatre to see Mr. and Mrs. Keeley act.

I must say a few words about Benjamin Webster, who, although not claiming to be a great actor in the highest sense, has not, so far as I know, anyone quite like him on the stage to-day. Webster is best known as an actor of melodramatic parts; but he was a genuine artist, and as moulded by him the melodramatic villain or the melodramatic hero became a creation and a reality. His manner was habitually quiet, and might, indeed, be called intense, and such purely humorous parts as that of the poor dramatic author in 'Masks and Faces' he brightened and saddened by stray gleams of pathos, which seemed to me to be artistically perfect in their way. Another famous impersonation of his was that of the principal figure in a piece called, if I remember rightly, 'The Roused Lion,' in which an elderly personage, who finds himself in danger of being pushed aside as an old fogey by the younger generation, suddenly pulls himself together, asserts himself, and proves that he can do 'all that may become a man,' whether in the ball-room, or on the fencing-ground, in love-making, or in fighting, much better than any of his juniors can do it. In such a piece as this Webster had to play many different kinds of part, and was equally good in all. He never missed the true artistic proportions of any living picture which he tried to set upon the stage. I associate his day in my memory with that of Madame Céleste, the Madame

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Céleste of 'Green Bushes'; not because the actor and actress resembled each other in style or art, but because they both belonged to about the same period of my recollections. Madame Céleste began as a dancer and came just after the reign of Carlotta Grisi, and Cerito, and Fanny Ellsler, and that immortal queen of the Ballet — Taglioni. I have heard some of my elders say that when Madame Céleste first appeared upon the stage she somewhat shocked the spectators by the unexpected shortness of her skirts. In those distant days the occupants of boxes and pit were not habituated to tights and the fringe of drapery which belong to the pantomime ballet of our more advanced time. I have heard Madame Taglioni herself say that during her fame in the ballet she and her compeers would never have consented to come on in the abbreviated skirts which became familiar to our eyes after her retirement from the stage. I never saw Taglioni until her later days, I never saw her or any of the great dancers of her time on the stage, and I never saw Madame Céleste as a dancer. I associate her chiefly with 'Green Bushes,' which at one time seemed as if destined to wear a perennial greenness. Only the other day when passing the doors of a theatre in a sea-side town I saw posters announcing a performance of 'Green Bushes.' My mind went back to Madame Céleste, and I became a youth again and saw London and its theatres as only youth can see them.

I do not propose in these Reminiscences to say anything about actors and actresses who are still upon the stage. Dramatic criticism has long ceased to be a part of my business, and when I have described the performances of actors and actresses who no longer move upon our boards it was because I thought it might interest many readers, to whom they are only historical names,

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to hear of the impression which each of them produced on the mind of one who was familiar with the stage in the great days of their success, and from whose memory the impressions can never be effaced. I have the honour to count among my personal friends many of the great English actors and actresses of the present day, men like Henry Irving, Charles Wyndham, Beerbohm Tree, Squire Bancroft, John L. Toole, George Alexander, Johnston Forbes-Robertson, E. S. Willard, Wilson Barrett, the Grossmiths, Lionel Brough; women like Ellen and Marion Terry, Lady Bancroft, Mrs. Kendal. I do not care to praise my friends to their faces, and I have no terms in which to speak of them but those of praise and friendship. Moreover they have as yet, happily for all of us, not come to be mere reminiscences, and I must leave some other writer to do justice to their memories when they have become memories and nothing more.

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CHAPTER XXXVII

MEN OF LIGHT AND LEADING

MORE than a quarter of a century has passed away since the election of Professor Huxley as President of the British Association was declared by a large proportion of his admirers to be a distinct triumph of the scientific school over the orthodox school in England. I do not suppose that Professor Huxley himself regarded his election in any such light, and I believe he was far too sincere and devoted a student of science and too modest a worshipper of science to believe that a personal honour paid to himself was a rebuke to the followers of any other school of thought. But it so happened that at the time it was the fashion in England to regard the whole world of thought as divided between science and orthodoxy, and to get possessed with the idea that these were two rival forces engaged in a struggle which must end in a total overthrow of the one or the other. 'It is the struggle between light and darkness,' said an eloquent writer of the time — I shall not specify the school to which he belonged — 'and one or the other must hold the world.' The writer did not seem to remember at the moment that the world had been undergoing successive and regular visitations of alternate light and darkness for as long as time had been, and that there seemed no immediate prospect of the extinction of either. Professor Owen, who undoubtedly possessed one of the broadest and keenest scientific

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intellects of his age, had come to be regarded by a large number of men, especially of the younger men, as having been pushed aside into something like obscurity because he could not or would not see his way into the fields opened up by his younger and bolder rivals. Undoubtedly he was one of the greatest naturalists since Cuvier; his contributions towards the facts and data of science have been valuable beyond all estimation; his practical labours in the British Museum would alone earn for him the gratitude of all students. Owen was, to my mind, the very perfection of a scientific lecturer. The easy flow of simple, expressive language, the luminous arrangement and style which made the profoundest exposition intelligible, the captivating variety of illustration, the clear, well-modulated voice, the self-possessed and graceful manner — all these were attributes which made Owen a delightful lecturer, although he put forward no pretensions, rhetorical skill, or eloquence of any high order. I have among my most valued possessions at the present day a personal memorial of Richard Owen, which dates from a time even before the day when so many people in this country were filling themselves with the belief that science was wholly triumphing over orthodoxy and that the star of Owen was paling before the stars of Darwin and Huxley. Owen was delivering a lecture in a great provincial city on one of his special subjects. I was then a young journalist, and I listened in rapt admiration to that flow of easy, thoughtful, exalted eloquence. I observed that Owen read the closing sentences from a manuscript which lay before him on his desk, and with all the audacity of a young provincial journalist I asked him, after the lecture was over, to give me his written copy of the closing passages, undertaking that the words should faithfully appear in the

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local newspapers all the same. Owen, I think, was rather taken by this blunt expression of my hero-worship, and our conversation ended in his handing me over the page of manuscript and inviting me to pay him a visit. It would be superfluous to say that I did pay him the visit, and that he received me with all that sweetness and frankness of manner which was characteristic of him, and which one so often finds associated with great intellect and assured fame. For many years I never saw Professor Owen again, but during my Gower Street days I sometimes met him, and until his death he occasionally sent me some reprint of a lecture he had delivered, or other indication that my existence had not wholly passed out of his memory.

In the meantime that keen struggle between science and orthodoxy, to which I have already alluded, had set in, and the younger men were beginning to regard Owen as one who had been pushed aside by the greater energy and boldness of the newer school which was represented by Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall. I am myself entirely lacking in all culture of the fields of science, and I never was able to understand why there should have been any antagonism between the followers of Owen and the followers of Darwin, or, indeed, whether there was any actual antagonism at all. But I found that most of the people whom I knew talked of Owen as representing the old school and Darwin as representing the new, and I could only accept the supposition that there was some sort of struggle going on, and that Owen was to me a living man because I had known him, and Darwin only a book or the head of a school because I had not known him. I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of Thomas Huxley later on, and to have the pleasure of meeting him often

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in the houses of private friends. Huxley was as delightful in society as he was powerful on the lecture platform. He was a brilliant talker, and he carried much of the spirit of the controversialist wherever he went, but as he had a keen sense of humour his controversial reply took the form of a jest quite as often as that of a direct argument. To hear Herbert Spencer and him sometimes engage in conversational controversy was something to be remembered, even by one as little qualified as myself to form any sound mental reasons for awarding the palm of debate.

I remember one discussion, at which, however, Herbert Spencer was not present, wherein I thought Huxley showed a determined wrong-headedness such as only a great scientific philosopher could display. It was during a small dinner-party given at the house of Mrs. Frank H. Hill, and I do not know how it came about that the American Declaration of Independence rose up as a subject of conversation. Huxley suddenly declared that the opening passage of the Declaration contained a statement which was on the face of it obviously and ludicrously false. We all showed natural anxiety to learn what was the ignorant sin which this great historical document had committed. Huxley explained to us that the error lay in the opening statement that 'all men are created equal.' This he declared to be a manifest absurdity; all men, he pointed out, were not created equal. Some were born with good health, some with hereditary taint; some came into the world distorted, some of goodly shape; some were born black; some were born white. Huxley we all knew loved a joke and had a boyish zest for humour, not common among philosophers, and we were inclined to think that this method of criticising the Declaration of Independence

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was but a passing freak of humour. Huxley, however, repudiated all idea of sportiveness or levity, assured us that he was perfectly serious, and declared that to his mind it marred the whole effect of the historical Declaration when he found it thus starting off with a scientific falsehood. Some of us endeavoured to point out that the framers of the Declaration of Independence must have been at least as well aware as most other people of the time that some men were born white while other men were born negroes; that the knowledge of this fact, at all events, must have been brought clearly home to the minds of American citizens, and that probably the framers of the Declaration only meant to maintain that all men were born with a right to the equal protection of the laws. But Huxley would not admit this reading of the Declaration, which he insisted was vitiated from the very beginning by an inaccurate statement, just as the most ingenious arithmetical calculation would have been if it had started on the assumption that two and two make five. I only introduce this anecdote to show how the acutest mind may sometimes puzzle itself in a difficulty which it has itself created, and how the joy of argument may sometimes for a moment narrow the broadest intellect. One may also be allowed perhaps to feel the natural delight of inferiority on finding a superior intellect entangled in sophism.

Huxley had, even in ordinary conversation, an intelligence so luminous that it shed light all around him on any topic which came within his range. Even where strictly political questions were concerned his judgment seemed always to sever, at once and at a stroke, the essentials from the non-essentials of any proposition and to cleave a way directly to the heart of the argument. Of course there was nothing of the mystic about him.

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The most superficial knowledge of his intellectual form would have forewarned anyone of that, but there was also nothing of the scientific recluse about him; he had never shut himself in his shell; his fine perceptions were alive to all that was stirring in art and literature, in the world of politics, and in the world of society. I can hardly imagine his finding any subject uninteresting which had an interest for even the smallest section of humanity. Many a time I have thought, and no doubt others have thought, when some political controversy was going on and when Huxley found or made time to take part in it, that he would have made a great name for himself as a political debater if he had been nothing else. Although a life-long politician myself I could not pretend to feel any regret that Huxley had not been stolen from science and made a present to politics; but I have often felt that if Huxley were in the House of Commons he would have proved a most formidable antagonist to any ministry with whom he had felt bound to come into antagonism. His power of phrase-making was sometimes as telling as that of Disraeli; and he had not merely a power of phrase-making but a power of discovering and exposing the central weakness of an adversary's position, which would have been of inestimable value during a great struggle in the House of Commons. It may seem a strange thing to say, but I must say it, that I cannot think of Thomas Huxley only as a great scientific man. Of course we all know that he will go down into fame as a great illustrator of scientific questions, and this surely would be fame enough for even the most ambitious. But when I think of Huxley I cannot help thinking of him as a worker in many fields, as a man whose mind had many different spheres of thought. Huxley came readily

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down into the arena of public controversy, and was a familiar and formidable figure there. Wherever there was strife there was Huxley. Years ago he came into the field almost unknown, like the Disinherited Knight in Scott's immortal romance; and, while the good-natured spectators were urging him to turn the blunt end of the lance against the shield of the least formidable opponent, he dashed with splendid recklessness, and with spear-point forward, against the buckler of Richard Owen himself, the most renowned of the naturalists of England. Indeed, Huxley had the soul and spirit of a gallant controversialist. Many times he warned the orthodox champions that if they played at bowls they must expect rubbers; and once in the fight he never spared. He had a happy gift of shrewd sense and sarcasm combined; and, indeed, I know no man who could exhibit a sophism as a sophism and hold it up to contempt and laughter more clearly and effectively in a single sentence of exhaustive satire.

Huxley was in point of fact as well as a scientific man a literary man and a writer. What he wrote would be worth reading for its style and its expression alone were it of no scientific authority; whereas we all know perfectly well that scientific men generally are read only for the sake of what they teach, and not at all for their manner of teaching it—rather, indeed, in despite of their manner of teaching it. Huxley was a fascinating writer, and had a happy way of pressing continually into the service of strictly scientific expositions illustrations caught from literature and art—even from popular and light literature. He seemed to understand clearly that you can never make scientific doctrines really popular while you are content with the ear of strictly scientific men, and therefore cultivated sedulously and success-

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fully the literary art of expression. A London friend of mine, who has had long experience in the editing of high-class periodicals, is in the habit of affirming humorously that the teachers of the public are divided into two classes: those who know something and cannot write, and those who know nothing and can write. Every literary man, especially every editor, will cordially agree with me that at the heart of this humorous extravagance is a solid kernel of truth. Now, scientific men very often belong to the class of those who know something, but cannot write. No one, however, could possibly confound Thomas Huxley with the band of those to whom the gift of expression is denied. He was a vivid, forcible, fascinating writer. His style as a lecturer was one which, for me at least, had a special charm. It was, indeed, devoid of any rhetorical eloquence; but it had all the eloquence which is born of the union of profound thought with simple expression and luminous diction. There was not much of the poetic, certainly, about him; only the frequent dramatic vividness of his illustrations suggested the existence in him of any of the higher imaginative qualities. I think there was something like a gleam of the poetic in the half-melancholy, half-humorous introduction of Balzac's famous 'Peau de Chagrin' into the Protoplasm lecture.

But Huxley as a rule trod only the firm earth, and deliberately, perhaps scornfully, rejected any attempts and aspirings after the clouds. His mind was in this way far more rigidly practical than that of Richard Owen. He was never eloquent in the sense in which Humboldt, for example, was so often eloquent. Being a politician, I may be excused for borrowing an illustration from the political arena, and saying that Huxley's eloquence was like that of Cobden: it was eloquence

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only because it was so simply and tersely truthful. The whole tone of his mind, the whole tendency of his philosophy, may be observed to have this character of quiet, fearless, and practical truthfulness. No seeker after truth could be more earnest, more patient, more disinterested. 'Dry light,' as Bacon calls it — light uncoloured by prejudice, undimmed by illusion, undistorted by interposing obstacles — was all that Huxley desired to have. He put no bounds to the range of human inquiry.

Huxley's mind seems to me to have been cast in a finer mould than that of Tyndall, for example. Decidedly Tyndall was a man of genius and great earnestness. He did perhaps more practical work in science than Huxley; he wrote more; he sometimes wrote more eloquently. But he wanted, to my thinking, that pure and colourless impartiality of inquiry and judgment which was Huxley's distinguishing characteristic. There was a certain coarseness of materialism about Tyndall; there was a vehement and almost an arrogant aggressiveness in him which must have interfered with the clearness of his views. He assailed the orthodox with the temper of what once was called a Hot Gospelier. Perhaps his Irish nature was partly accountable for this warm and eager combativeness; perhaps having sat so devotedly at the feet of his friend, the great apostle of force, Thomas Carlyle, may help to explain the unsparing vigour of his controversial style. However that may be, Tyndall was assuredly one of the most impatient of sages, one of the most intolerant of philosophers. His temper did unquestionably tend to weaken his authority. You could trust him implicitly where it was only a question of the glacial theory or an atmospheric condition; but you had to follow the Carlylean philosopher very cautiously indeed where he

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undertook to instruct you on the subject of races. The negro, for example, conquered Tyndall altogether. The philosopher lost his temper and forgot his science the moment he came to examine poor black Sambo's woolly skull, and remembered that there were sane and educated white people who maintained that the owner of the skull is a man and a brother. In debates which cannot be settled by dry science, Huxley's sympathies almost invariably guided him aright; Tyndall's almost invariably set him wrong. During the American Civil War, Huxley, like Sir Charles Lyell and some other eminent scientific men, sympathised with the cause of the North; Tyndall, on the other hand, was an eager partisan of the South. A still more decisive test severed the two men more widely. The story of the Jamaica massacre divided all England into two fierce and hostile camps. I am not going to weary my readers with a horrible story to which I have already alluded more than once in these pages. Enough to say that the whole question at issue in England in relation to the Jamaica tragedies was whether the belief that a negro insurrection was impending justified the white residents in flogging and hanging as many negro men and women, unarmed and unresisting, as they could find time to flog and hang, without any ceremony of trial, evidence, or even of inquiry. The Jamaica question then raised a bitter controversy in England. Naturally, John Bright and Stuart Mill and Goldwin Smith took one side of it; Thomas Carlyle and Charles Kingsley and John Ruskin the other. That was to be expected; anyone could have told it beforehand. But the occasion brought out men who had never taken part in political controversy before; and then you saw what kind of hearts and sympathies these new agitators had. Herbert Spencer emerged

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for the first time in his life, so far as I know, from the rigid seclusion of a silent student's career, and appeared in public as an active, hard-working member of a political organisation. The American Civil War had drawn Mill for the first time into the public arena of politics; the Jamaica massacre made a political agitator of Herbert Spencer. The noble human sympathies of Spencer, his austere and uncompromising love of justice, his instinctive detestation of brute, blind, despotic force, compelled him to come from his seclusion, and join those who protested against the lawless and senseless massacre of the wretched blacks in Jamaica. So, too, with Huxley, who, if he did not take part in a political organisation, yet lent the weight of his influence and the vigour of his pen to add to the force of the protest. During the whole of that prolonged season of incessant and active controversy, with the keenest intellects and the sharpest tongues of England employing themselves eagerly on either side, I can recall to mind nothing which, for justice, sound sense, high principle, and exquisite briefness of pungent sarcasm, equalled one of Huxley's letters on the subject to the 'Pall Mall Gazette.' The mind which was not touched by the force of that incomparable mixture of satire and sense would surely have remained untouched though one rose from the dead. The delicious gravity with which Huxley accepted all the positions of his opponents, assumed the propositions about the high character of the Jamaica governor and the white residents, and the immorality of poor Gordon and the negroes, and then reduced the case of the advocates of the massacre to 'the right of all virtuous persons, as such, to put to death all vicious persons, as such,' was well worthy of Swift himself.

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On the other hand, Professor Tyndall plunged eagerly into the controversy as a defender of the policy and the people by whose authority the massacre was carried on. I do not suppose he made any inquiry into the facts — nothing of his that I read or heard of led me to suppose that he had — but he went right off on the Carlylean theory about governing minds, and superior races, and the right of strong men, and all the rest of the nonsense which Carlyle once made fascinating and his imitators made vulgar. I do not think I am doing Tyndall an injustice when I regard him as a less austere and trustworthy follower of the pure truth than Huxley.

The whole life of Herbert Spencer has been a pure, rigorous, anchorite-like devotion to knowledge, and is indeed a wonderful phenomenon in an age like the present. He has laboured for the love of labour, and for the good it does to the world, almost absolutely without reward. He is a sensitive, silent, self-reliant man, endowed with a pure passion for knowledge, and the quickest, keenest love of justice and right. There is something indeed quite Quixotic, in the better sense, about the utterly disinterested and self-forgetting eagerness with which Herbert Spencer will set himself to see right done, even in the most trivial of cases. Little, commonplace, trifling instances of unfairness or injustice, such as most of us observe every day, and which even the most benevolent of us will think himself warranted in passing by on his way to work, without interference, will summon into activity — into positively unrelenting eagerness — all the sympathies and energies of Herbert Spencer, nor will the great student of life's ultimate principles return to his own high pursuits until he has obtained for the poor sempstress restitution of the over-fare exacted by the extortionate omnibus-

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conductor, or seen that the policeman on duty is not too rough in his entreatment of the little captured pick-pocket. As one man has an unappeasable passion for pictures, and another for horses, so Herbert Spencer has a passion for justice. All this does not appear on first or casual acquaintance ; but I have heard many striking, and some very whimsical, illustrations of it given by friends who know Spencer far better than I do. Indeed, I should say there are few men of great intellect and character who reveal themselves so little to the ordinary observer as Herbert Spencer. In casual conversation he does not impress one in the least. Almost all men of well-earned distinction seem to have, above all things, a strongly marked individuality. You meet a man of this class by chance ; you have no idea who he is ; perhaps you do not even discover, have not an opportunity of discovering, that he is a man of genius or of intellect ; but you do almost invariably find yourself impressed with a strong individual influence -- the man seems to be somebody -- he is not just like any other man. But Herbert Spencer is the opposite of this. All that Dr. Johnson said of Burke might be conveniently reversed in the case of Spencer. The person sheltering under a hedge, the ostler in the yard, might talk long enough with him and never feel tempted to say when he had gone, 'There has been a remarkable man here.' A London literary man, not long since dead, once told me that he was induced many years ago to go to a large dinner-party by the assurance that Spencer was to be there, and was actually to have the chair next to his own at table. Our friend went, a little late, and found himself disappointed. Next to him on one side was a man whom he knew and did not care about ; on the other side, a quiet, unimposing personage. With this

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latter, for want of a better, he talked. My friend started some ordinary, conventional talk, good for nothing, meaning nothing. The dinner was nearly over when my friend heard some one address his right-hand neighbour as 'Spencer.' Amazed out of all decorum, he turned to the quiet, reserved man and broke out with the words, 'Why, you don't mean to say that you are Herbert Spencer?' 'Oh, yes,' the other replied, as quietly as ever, 'I am Herbert Spencer.'

Few men have led a quieter life than that led by Dr. James Martineau, and yet few men have had a wider influence over certain schools of thought. James Martineau was born twenty years before the birth of Huxley, and last year I joined with thousands of others in sending him congratulations on his ninety-third birthday. When I was a very young man settled, for the time, in Liverpool, James Martineau was the minister of a Unitarian congregation there. His sister, Harriet Martineau, was then living in the Lake country. She had taken a kindly interest in me, although it was never my good fortune to see her, but she liked some things I had written in a local newspaper and sent me encouraging messages, urged me to go to London, and did her best to find me an opening there. In the meantime I belonged to some literary associations in Liverpool to which James Martineau lent his advice, countenance, and influence, and I began to look up to him as a sort of teacher, although I did not belong to his form of faith, and could not of course be a member of his congregation. The Unitarian body in Liverpool were much given to the culture of art, and literature, and science, and formed a nucleus of quiet thought in the busy life of a city almost as eager and rapid in its energy as New York itself. Dr. Martineau's quiet, pervading influence made

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itself felt among all young people who were seeking introduction into the realms of thought, no matter what their religious faith might be. His style as a preacher and as a lecturer was peculiar. It was above all things thoughtful; the speaker seemed to be thinking aloud, never using words for the sake of ornament but only employing them as the sole means of communicating ideas. Yet the style was rich in expression, rich in poetic imagery, and curiously artistic in phrase, but the listener always felt as if the imagery only shaped itself in order to give appropriate form to the thoughts, and as if the art were but the instrument and not the ornament of the speaker's discourse. It could not be called a simple style of speaking, for it was full of words and might seem at first to be florid in its order of decoration, and yet, even if one were disposed to be merely critical, he would have found it hard to say where an illustration, a sentence, or a word could be left out if the speaker were not to stint the flow of his ideas.

After I had settled in London Dr. Martineau was Principal of the Manchester New College in Gordon Square, and I had sometimes an opportunity of meeting him there and had often a chance of hearing him address an audience. He kept himself quietly withdrawn almost altogether from political affairs, and was not to be induced, as other Unitarian ministers sometimes were, to bear testimony on this or that side of some great question in government then stirring the civilised world. His intellectual temperament was decidedly conservative — of course I need not say that I am not now using the word in any political sense — his inclination in all questions that had to deal with the intellectual and educational movements of humanity was to preserve rather than to destroy; to foster and cultivate rather than to up-

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root; his sympathies always went with advancing ideas, but there was nothing of the fanatic about him, and I do not think he believed much in revolution, at all events in sudden revolutions, even in the worlds of thought. He had a strong objection to the pessimist's views of life, whether these expressed themselves in blood-curdling pulpit anathemas or in cynical works of fiction. I remember a saying of his which impressed me much at the time and has remained with me as an influence ever since: the declaration that he could not believe in the teaching, whether given gravely or lightly, which found the devil everywhere and God nowhere. If there were really a conflict between science and faith I should think James Martineau would have found it hard to take sides in it. I should find it as hard to think of him becoming an advocate of science against faith as of faith against science.

The name of James Martineau and the associations with Liverpool which it brings back to my mind recall to my memory the writings of a man, once widely known, who had some family connection with Liverpool. I mean William Rathbone Greg, the author of the then much discussed 'Creed of Christendom.' William Rathbone Greg was a well-known political and philosophical essayist, who wrote largely for the 'Edinburgh Review' and the 'Westminster Review,' and more lately for the 'Pall Mall Gazette.' The 'Creed of Christendom,' though a clever book in its way, and though it was much talked of and much criticised at the time, made no abiding mark. It was read and liked by those whose opinions it expressed, but I question if it ever made one single convert or suggested one doubt to a truly believing mind. I mention it because it was the only work of what is called a directly infidel charac-

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ter, not pretending to a scientific basis, which was contributed to the literature of English philosophy by a man of high culture and literary reputation during my memory.

Freethinking has never been in England a very formidable rival of orthodox theology. Perhaps there is something in the practical nature of the average English mind which makes it indifferent to mere speculation. The ordinary English mind understands being a Churchman or a Dissenter, a Roman Catholic or a no-Popery man; but it hardly understands how people can be got to concern themselves with mere sceptical speculation. Writings like those of Rousseau, for example, never could have produced in England anything like the effect they wrought in France. Most of the influence exercised by my friend George Jacob Holyoake came from the position which he took up as an opponent of certain concrete forms of law and custom. Holyoake's whole life was one of self-denial, of love for the human race, especially for the poor and struggling, and of devotion to every great reforming cause. Holyoake never was an Atheist, and never professed to be anything of the kind. He was really what might be called an agnostic, not in the vague unmeaning sense which is casually given to the phrase to-day, when a certain order of clever, self-conceited young woman thinks it impressive to declare herself an agnostic, but in the sense in which it was used by Lessing, who contended that it was impossible for man to solve the mystery of the future, and that his duty was to do the best he could for humanity in the present. I do not know whether Holyoake was a student of Lessing, but he has always seemed to me to have acted in regard to this subject as if he were under Lessing's inspiration. Certainly the man who be-

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lieves Lessing to have been an Atheist is sadly in need of some study in a biographical dictionary. George Jacob Holyoake I have known for much more than a quarter of a century, and have been concerned with him in many a movement for political and social reform. I have not known a man of more unselfish purpose or more philanthropic aim. He might fairly be described, like Leigh Hunt's Abou Ben Adhem, 'as one who loves his fellow men.' He has suffered all manner of penalties again and again because he would not pretend to have a certain belief when he had it not. His influence among the working classes, for whom he wrought and sacrificed so much, has always been a wise and moderating influence. He has never counselled, or urged, or tacitly encouraged turbulent or violent movements of any kind. Indeed, he seems to have cultivated a style of public speaking which had as little as possible to do with passionate appeal and the denunciatory rhetoric of the ordinary platform agitator.

In this way Holyoake differed altogether from Charles Bradlaugh, who was above all things an iconoclast, as he once used to describe himself in his public addresses. Bradlaugh's nature was tempestuous, and his style of eloquence was thrilling and impassioned. The two men, although they were usually classed together as Free-thinkers, were led to quite different conclusions by their freedom of thought. Bradlaugh was an avowed, confirmed, unbeliever where religious questions were concerned, and he remained an unbeliever to the last. I had had some acquaintance with Bradlaugh long before he came into the House of Commons; had been associated with him in various popular movements during the days when, mounted on his horse and making use of his old training as a trooper, he used to marshal and keep in

order the processions of reformers into Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park. Bradlaugh became a very popular man in the House of Commons. After the first general outburst of wrath against him and his tumultuous methods had subsided, there came a sort of feeling that he had not been treated quite fairly, and an inclination grew up to make the best of him and to show that there was no set ill-feeling against him. Bradlaugh himself seemed to be a good deal touched by the courtesy which most of the Conservatives, his implacable enemies at first, began to show him at a later period. 'I don't know which sickens me more,' said one irreconcilable Tory to me in the House of Commons, 'the way Bradlaugh ko-toos to us, or the way we ko-too to Bradlaugh.' Bradlaugh was undoubtedly a man of genial temperament to whom courtesy came by nature, as it does indeed to most brave fighting men, and he was glad in private to meet his bitterest opponent on terms of amity. Bradlaugh liked praise, as I suppose most of us do, but there was a simple, child-like, frankness in his quest after favourable opinion which sometimes became rather touching. Whenever he spoke in the House, even if the speech were only half a dozen sentences long, he always turned to those near him after he had resumed his seat and asked, 'Did I do that well? Now tell me, did I do that well?' It is not saying one word too much to say that whenever Bradlaugh spoke in the House he spoke well; partly for the reason that he was a very eloquent speaker with a fine voice, but partly, too, for the reason that he never spoke unless he really felt that he had something to say which ought to be said. Like most others who knew him I came to have a great respect and a great liking for Bradlaugh. I think both Holyoake and he are fairly entitled to a place in this chapter on men of light and leading.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

WANDERERS AND WAR CORRESPONDENTS

BEFORE I became a resident of that Fitzroy Bohemia which I have described in this book I used to make frequent excursions into a Bohemia which had its headquarters in the region of Fleet Street. This was, as most persons would naturally assume, a Bohemia of young authors, and journalists, and actors, and of others who sought introduction into such companionship. There was a literary club which used to meet in a Fleet Street hotel. I am sorry to say I have forgotten the name of the club, and I do not know whether it still exists or has passed into nothingness. George Augustus Sala was one of its members, and so were William Black and Tom Hood and Hain Friswell, and many other old friends of mine belonged to it. It was there that I first met Richard Burton, the renowned traveller and explorer, the fearless soldier, the brilliant writer, the dare-devil seeker of adventure, the fascinating companion. I do not know whether the writers of novels and of descriptive passages in newspapers had got into the use of the word magnetic at that time as an adjective illustrating the attractive or commanding powers of some man or woman. If the word was then in use it certainly must have been often applied to the influence of Richard Burton. The first moment one met him the

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force of the magnetic influence was felt. But the curious fact to which I wish to draw attention is that the Richard Burton of those days was in manner and in bearing a totally different man from the Richard Burton whom I knew at a later period of his existence and of mine. The Richard Burton whom I met at the Fleet Street club and various other places about the same time was a man of domineering presence and almost overbearing manners. Dark, swarthy, loud-voiced, self-asserting, bearing down all argument and all contradiction with a vehement self-reliance which had something almost fierce in it, the Richard Burton of those days might have been taken as the very type of a romantic young lady's ideal pirate, or captain of a robber band. Burton dashed at an argument as he might have dashed against a band of savage enemies on some African plain. Yet his manner somehow never conveyed with it the least idea of boastfulness or exaggeration. No matter what the man's self-assertion, the listener always felt convinced that there was no mere boastfulness about him, and that all he said he had done, he really had done and was ready to do again. The sense of power, of indomitable power, of a spirit that never knew hesitation or fear, was borne out in every glance and every word. It was impossible not to admire him, and yet I found it, at the time, impossible to get rid of a certain feeling of dislike to him. Most of our writers, even of our great writers, when they picture for us a loud-voiced, arrogant, overbearing man, who boasts of his life of adventure and of daring, have painted for us at the same time and in the same form a man who has not done half the dare-devil deeds he boasts of having done, if, indeed, they have not pictured him as a Thraso, or a Bessus, or a Parolles. Thus

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we have got into our minds that, so far as literature is concerned, a blustering adventurer must be always more or less of an impostor. But nobody with the least insight into human character could have been in the company of Richard Burton for half an hour without seeing that underneath all his swagger and self-assertion and eager desire to control admiration, there was an absolutely fearless spirit and an abiding determination to be accurate and literal in statement.

Burton went his wild way of travel and of adventure, and for many years I lost sight of him altogether. Of course I was always hearing of him and reading of him. Burton never kept the world waiting very long for some tidings of his whereabouts. When we did meet again I met a man strangely soberised and calmed down in temperament and manner from the Richard Burton of my earlier acquaintance. During this latter period we met at the houses of many London friends, most often, I think, at the house of my friends Dr. George Bird and his sister Miss Alice Bird, who were then living in Welbeck Street. Burton had laid aside all the rough, overbearing manners of the earlier days. He had become quiet, even gentle, in demeanour, willing to listen to anyone's views, although on subjects which the 'anyone' was not by any means likely to understand so well as Burton did; modest of assertion, even when dealing with regions and with themes which he himself knew at first hand; patient of contradiction, even on subjects of which he had made himself a master. What had brought about this remarkable change? I presume one need have no great hesitation in ascribing it, above all things, to the influence of the gentle, true-hearted woman whom he had made his wife and his companion. I have never seen a pair who seemed to be more com-

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pletely, yet less ostentatiously, devoted to each other than Sir Richard and Lady Burton. Her eyes seemed always to follow him with looks of the most tender watchfulness and sympathy. It was easy to understand that under the constant influence of such a companionship the manners of a man so really great at heart would have lost their roughness and arrogance and softened and sweetened gradually into affinity with that soft, sweet, yet strong womanly nature. For awhile it used to amuse and amaze me to hear Burton, when invited to lay down the law on some subject of Eastern interest, quietly and modestly declare that on that particular question some other man of Eastern experience was probably a better authority than he, and that the other man, if appealed to, would be sure to give a judgment about which there could be no dispute. Could this really be the Richard Burton of the old days in the Fleet Street club? What likelihood had there seemed then of Burton's admitting that anybody could be better qualified than he to give an opinion on any and every Eastern subject? Another contrast of peculiarities in the former Richard Burton and the latter. It was not always easy to get the former to give his opinion or his advice on any Oriental question to one who, like myself, for instance, was little better than a mere ignoramus on such matters. Burton's manner always seemed to say, even if his words did not, 'Well, now, you know, you really are so little acquainted with these subjects that it would be no use my throwing away my experience in trying to instruct you. Go and spend a year or two of rough travel in this or that Asiatic or African region, and then it might be worth my while to put you in the way of forming sound opinions about that particular country and its ways and its people.' The latter Rich-

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ard Burton was as gentle, as modest, and as patient in striving to enlighten folks like myself, when we had sense enough to seek for enlightenment, as I had known Richard Owen to be when answering the question of some diffident admirer on some problem of natural history.

My son, who was a great admirer of Richard Burton, having perhaps caught the flame of admiration in the first instance from the ardour of Algernon Swinburne, came to know the Burtons well in those later days, and, indeed, worked with Lady Burton in the preparation of a condensed and popular version of Burton's rendering of 'The Thousand and One Nights.' Some lines on Burton, written by my son, were inscribed, at the wish of his widow, on the tomb of the great traveller at Mortlake. I remember hearing Burton speak with an anger, which in those later days found only quiet expression, about some of the extravagant stories which had made their way into print about him, and about his alleged indifference to the lives of others where the accomplishment of any personal object of his became endangered. Some of those tales I had read so often in print that I came to regard them as unquestionably authentic, and Burton assured me that he had contradicted them again and again without being able to shake the popular faith in their truth. It was of course the old familiar experience: a telling story is put into print and everyone reads and remembers it; it is contradicted on authority, and of those who read the story not one in twenty sees the contradiction. My later memories of Burton are full of nothing but admiration. All the aggressiveness, the antagonism, the dogmatic self-assertion, the desire to startle and shock which had brought on him severe criticisms at a former part of his career had passed

away from him, and left him with the truest and brightest parts of his nature, with the quiet courage, patience, and moderation of a genuine hero. I am glad and proud to have known the earlier Richard Burton, but I should not have known even him quite truly if I had not known the later Richard Burton as well.

Colonel Frederick Burnaby — Fred Burnaby, as everyone loved to describe him — I came to know only during the later years of his life, after he had reached the zenith of his fame as soldier and explorer, as rider and balloonist. When he ventured with his usual intrepidity into the fields of politics, previously unexplored by him, and gallantly sought the representation of a great midland city, Mr. Chamberlain sarcastically remarked that Burnaby's ride into Khiva would be nothing to his run out of Birmingham. Burnaby made a good fight of it, however; but John Bright once observed that wherever you dip into the sea you find it salt, and wherever you dip into Birmingham you find it Liberal, and so Fred Burnaby found it. I only knew Burnaby socially, had not even, as my friend Henry W. Lucy had, the pleasure of going up in a balloon with him. I met him at several houses in London, and was captivated, as everybody who met him must have been, by the charming brightness and frankness of his talk and of his manners, by the blending of strength and sweetness, of chivalrous daring and romantic gentleness that were in his character. One peculiar recollection of Fred Burnaby I have that will remain with me always. Just before his last and fatal expedition there was a dinner given at the Mansion House by the Lord Mayor of the year in celebration of some great occasion or in honour of some great personage. I do not now remember what was the motive of the feast, but I do well remember that Burnaby was

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one of the guests, and that I had the good fortune to be placed near him at the table. Our enjoyment of the dinner was somewhat qualified by the fact that we both had to make speeches when the time for speech-making should come. We grumbled to each other over the mis-giving that our position at the dinner-table seemed to us to make it uncertain whether our voices could be easily heard in all parts of the hall. Burnaby's turn came first, and he had a magnificent voice and a fine delivery, and it seemed to me that he must have been heard with ease in every part of the room. My turn came, and I had no great confidence in my own voice and my own power of making myself audible in so large a hall, and when my task was done I resumed my seat in a discontented frame of mind, secretly envying Burnaby and every other orator of the evening who had spoken up to that time. Later in the evening Burnaby and I went out together into the room where tea and coffee were served, and there we fell into condolence with each other. To my surprise, Burnaby was as little satisfied with the delivery of his speech as I was with the delivery of mine. He said he felt sure he had not made himself heard half over the dining-room; I affirmed my positive conviction that I had been absolutely inaudible to three-fourths of the guests. We both agreed in throwing the whole blame on the acoustic properties of the building. Burnaby argued that the defect lay principally with the position of certain pillars; I contended that the arrangement of our tables was mainly to be condemned for the non-transmission of the eloquence. We talked over this so seriously and so dejectedly that a listener might have taken us for two aspiring orators, whose oratory fate had blighted in its very birth. Then some friends came up and inter-

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rupted our talk, and we drifted apart and went our several ways, and after that night I never saw Burnaby again. Soon he went out to his last field, and flung away his gallant life with a reckless and a characteristic heroism. A braver or a more high-spirited man than Fred Burnaby never lived, and when I remember that the last talk I ever had with him was merely a grumble or two over the defective properties of the Mansion House dining-room as a medium for the transmission of after-dinner eloquence, I have been led to the opinion that the melodrama often gives us a more really faithful picture of the feelings of its hero than the hero's own talk sometimes does, when he has to mix with the petty troubles and the trumpery grumbles of real life. Yet I think I was able to appreciate the hero nature of Fred Burnaby, although I never saw him on a battle-field, and although my last talk with him was about our speeches at a Mansion House dinner.

The war correspondent is a figure which may properly be called peculiar to our own time, or at all events to the reign of Queen Victoria. Of course in days long before those of Cæsar or of Xenophon there were soldiers who employed their pens for the purpose of telling the world what they had seen in a campaign. But the war correspondent as we know him, the journalist with or without professional military training, who is sent out with the special and sole object of describing a battle or a siege, may be said to have begun his career after the present reign had made some advance on its way. There were special correspondents, indeed, commissioned by London newspapers before the days of the Crimean war, but I think it would not be unreasonable to say that with the Crimean war the regular era of the special correspondent set in. I have known a good

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many special correspondents in my time. The first I ever knew was William Howard Russell, and I dare say he had little thought of being a war correspondent at the time when he and I were first thrown together. When I first met Sir William Howard Russell, as he now is, it was in the Court House at Clonmel, in Tipperary, where he was attending as one of the reporters for the 'Times,' sent to give an account of the trial of William Smith O'Brien, Thomas Francis Meagher, and others who were charged with high treason after the failure of the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848. I was not quite eighteen years old, and I was helping to report the proceedings for the 'Cork Examiner,' then owned and edited by my friend John Francis Maguire, who afterwards won an honourable reputation in the House of Commons. I felt very proud indeed of having the honour to be presented to a reporter from the great London newspaper, and was especially delighted to learn that Mr. Russell was a fellow-countryman of my own. After the Special Commission in Clonmel I do not think I met William Howard Russell again until I had found an occupation on the literary staff of a Liverpool newspaper. The Crimean campaign had been fought out in the meantime, and Russell had made his mark and his fame as war correspondent for the 'Times,' and he came to Liverpool to deliver his lecture on the events of the Crimea. He gave his lecture in the Philharmonic Hall, where Dickens had delivered his readings, and where Thackeray had given his lectures on the Four Georges. The newspaper men of Liverpool were anxious to present an address to Russell for the purpose of offering him their congratulations on his great success. I was one of those engaged in preparing the address, and it was presented in due course to Rus-

sell, who spoke a few genial, happy sentences in reply. I remember that we unknown provincial journalists were greatly pleased by the friendly, brotherly way in which he received us, and the unaffected interest which he seemed to take in our work and in our professional ambitions. After that pleasant meeting I did not see Russell for many years. When we met again I had been long settled in London, and had found my way into literature, and I have since then been meeting him from time to time, as everybody meets him who is in the way of meeting distinguished men. Russell, I suppose, is the first of the line of famous war correspondents who have made a real mark on the history of the present reign.

I have already said something about my early acquaintance with Archibald Forbes, who first obtained a hearing from the public through the columns of the 'Evening Star' — a London paper with which I was then associated. Archibald Forbes and I came into literary companionship again at a later date, when he was war correspondent for the 'Daily News' and I was writing articles for the same journal. No special correspondent ever rendered more brilliant and faithful service to a newspaper than Forbes rendered to the 'Daily News.' If Russell was the first of the great war correspondents who took the field in the service of a newspaper, Archibald Forbes may fairly be described as the first of the great correspondents who undertook the work after the spread of the telegraphic system had made it necessary that the correspondent should take his notes as he sat in his saddle, and when no fixed hour for the departure of the mails gave him any chance of an interval during which to collect his thoughts and revise his copy.

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Another brilliant war correspondent whom I knew was Edmund O'Donovan, the 'man of Merv' whose letters to the 'Daily News' attracted the attention of the whole civilised world. O'Donovan was an Irishman, I need hardly say, and he came of a family distinguished in Celtic scholarship. When a young man he was engaged in the Fenian movement, and on its failure he turned his attention to journalism, as John Boyle O'Reilly and others have done. I never saw him until after he had won his fame as one of the mysterious triumvirate who ruled at Merv, and I met him for the first time at Constantinople. My son and daughter and I were then making a visit to the city, and while we were there it was known that Edmund O'Donovan, having left Merv, was coming to Constantinople on his way to London. O'Donovan was then the hero of the time, and the most intense excitement prevailed among all the English, French, German, Italian, and American sojourners in Constantinople when it was known that O'Donovan had consented to deliver a public address, telling the story of his wonderful residence in Merv. The expectation of Pera was raised to its highest point. The English Club was wild with curiosity and anxiety. I use the word anxiety with a definite purpose, for some reports had got about that O'Donovan was a man of eccentric habits, who had lately lived too much out of civilisation to be safely depended on for a punctual adherence to civilisation's customs, and the friends of O'Donovan were full of dread lest he should not arrive in time, or even arriving in time, should fail to fulfil his engagement. O'Donovan did, however, arrive in time, and then a few of his friends constituted themselves a sort of body-guard to watch over his movements and see that he did not disappoint his audience.

O'Donovan, in fact, did not disappoint his audience. All the distinguished foreign residents of Pera, of Stamboul, crowded into the hall where O'Donovan was to deliver his lecture, and O'Donovan, in his Merv costume, appeared on the platform true to time, and delivered his lecture. I met him several times during his stay in Constantinople, and he called to see me more than once at Misseiri's Hotel, where I was staying, and where, by the way, my friend Philip Stanhope happened to be staying also. But O'Donovan's time in Constantinople was not destined to be long. His love of exploring sent him wandering at night into all parts of the city, and he had a way of expressing his opinion of the Sultan and the Sultan's mode of government which was not likely to make a favourable impression on the ears and the minds of any of the Sultan's devoted subjects. Unluckily for himself, in this particular instance, O'Donovan's Turkish was far too good not to be understood by any Turk, and O'Donovan preferred to make his comments and criticisms in the tongue of the native population. The result was that he received official orders to quit the Turkish dominions forthwith, and not return there, or it might be the worse for him, and O'Donovan's friends thought the best thing they could do for him would be to hurry him away. I met him afterwards in London, where he was the lion of the season, or at least would have been if he would only consent to be lionised according to the conditions of modern society. But O'Donovan did not seem able to submit himself always to these conditions. Strict punctuality of course is not insisted on in the case of a very distinguished guest, but even Mrs. Leo-Hunter herself might be expected to become impatient when the long delayed dinner was nearly over before the guest

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of the evening made his appearance. O'Donovan had lodgings for a time in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury Square, and he sometimes startled the dwellers in that serene and solemn region by firing pistol shots out of his windows about the time when ordinary folks were thinking of going to bed. There was no harm or danger in O'Donovan's pistol practice. His weapons were leadless, as those of a distinguished countryman of his were once invidiously said to be; poor O'Donovan was only trying the capacity of his pistols for quick discharge by the use of percussion caps and mere powder. O'Donovan, of course, would soon have settled down to the prosaic ways of ordinary city life if he had remained long in civilisation, but his genius and his duty as a war correspondent soon took him to the field again, and he met his fate in the Soudan with the army of Hicks Pasha. His was a gallant and a fearless spirit. He had gifts for his own peculiar calling which have not been surpassed; and he was a most generous, kindly, eccentric, lovable man. One cannot help thinking that he died just as he would have wished to die.

One of the youngest of my wandering friends is Mr. Walter Savage Landor, grandson of the famous poet. Savage Landor, while hardly more than a youth, made for himself a name as an explorer of the Japanese island where live the race of the hair-covered Ainos, whose very existence up to his time had been only a matter of rumour and of faith to almost all European travellers. More lately Landor has filled the world with his name by his daring expedition to the sacred city of Thibet and by the tortures which he suffered. No one would suppose who saw Savage Landor for the first time that he was likely to be the hero of so many extraordinary adventures. He is of delicate physical frame, with an

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almost feminine grace of appearance and manner, and to look on him one would never know that so slight a form covered a heart of such dauntless courage and nerves of such indomitable endurance. My acquaintance with Landor was made in the first instance through a friend of his and of mine, Robert Hochstetter, a clever and brilliant young Viennese, whom my family and I came to know during a winter in Algiers, and who has many friends in England — and, indeed, in various other countries, for he, too, has been much of a traveller in his time. Landor has many artistic gifts, is an exquisite hand at silver point drawings, and might have made for himself a career as a painter if his stars had not guided him into the ways of perilous exploration. When I first knew him he was living in St. Ermin's Mansions, Westminster, and, as we all thought, was settling down quietly to the life of an artist, when he suddenly accepted a commission from a London daily newspaper to make his way into the sacred city of Thibet. During his stay in London at that time we became frequent visitors at each other's residences, and came to be in almost constant intercourse. At that time he occupied himself during the intervals of his silver point work at the completion of a flying-machine, with which he fondly hoped before long to cross the Atlantic. I am afraid we did not all of us take his flying-machine quite seriously, but he insisted that he of all men had got at the true principles of mechanism for the purpose, and that he only wanted time to bring his discovery to perfection, and to sail, like the Theban eagle,

With supreme dominion
Through the azure fields of air.

We naturally took much pleasure in prevailing on him to tell of his experiences among the hair-covered Ainos.

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Once he was mentioning to us the fact that to please a young beauty of that island there was no more likely way than to stroke her gently down the back. 'Does she purr when you stroke her?' an irreverent member of the company presumed to ask. Landor no doubt thought this too flippant a way of dealing with his heroine, but he was easily propitiated, and went on with further illustrations of the ways and habits of the Ainos. He is a most charming companion, ready at conversation on almost every possible subject, and not in the least disposed to exaggerate his adventures, or to obtrude them upon the ears of ordinary listeners; indeed he had to be gently drawn out if we wanted to get from him some account of his explorations and his experiences. When mere strangers happened to be present one would hardly have guessed from his talk that he had known any places but the West End of London and that delightful city of Florence in which he was born and brought up. He spoke with a distinct Italian accent, and, indeed, although he talked and wrote in excellent English, it was still rather the English of a highly educated foreigner than that of a genuine Briton. He told us of his undertaking the enterprise to Thibet and of the gradual progress of his arrangements for the expedition, but we still somehow hoped that the project might come to nothing, for his friends in London were anxious that he should not expose himself to the tremendous dangers of such an undertaking. It was only when at last he came to say farewell to us that we realised his full determination to brave everything for the sake of accomplishing his purpose.

A long time passed before we heard anything from or of him, and many of us feared that he would never be seen in Europe again. When the news came that he

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had accomplished so much, and the story began to be told of the sufferings he had undergone, there were doubts expressed by many of the writers in the newspapers as to the reality of his adventure and the price he had had to pay for it. Those who knew him felt no doubt whatever of the truth of his story, for we were well aware that his daring spirit knew no fear, that his indomitable purpose could not be stayed but by death, and the mere fact that he had not perished but survived was enough to convince us that he had done all his spirit had urged him on to do. I have been living out of London since his return, and have not yet had a chance of seeing him, but I am proud of him as a friend, and am glad that he has added another distinction to the name of Savage Landor.

CHAPTER XXXIX

‘ AFTER ACHILLES ’

‘TELL me,’ said a distinguished political friend of mine one day, ‘do you think there is anything Lord Rosebery could not do if he tried?’ I felt inclined to reply that I did not think he could say an ungracious thing even if he were to try, but my friend was a man of a somewhat solemn temperament, and I did not like to give what might have seemed a frivolous answer. So I had to content myself with the admission that I did not know what Lord Rosebery might not accomplish if he were to set his mind on accomplishing it. Indeed, I think we should find it hard, all of us, to give any other answer to the question. Lord Rosebery has proved his success as a political leader, as a political speaker, as a lecturer, as the author of ‘Ceremonial Addresses,’ and as an after-dinner speaker. He has proved himself a success on the turf, as a breeder of horses, as a yachtsman, as a critic of pictures and statues, as a writer and reader of books, as a patron of art, and as a leader of society. The first time I ever heard him speak in public was at a dinner given, I think, at the Crystal Palace, many years ago, on some occasion which brought a large number of authors and actors together. Now, some of the authors and some of the actors were men who had made a distinct reputation for themselves in the art of after-dinner oratory. From each of these much was

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expected, and each gratified expectation to the full. But I thought Lord Rosebery's speech was the happiest of all in its blending of wit, humour, apposite allusion, and clear strong common-sense. Since that time I have heard Lord Rosebery deliver many after-dinner speeches, and I rank him amongst the most accomplished masters of that order of eloquence to whom it has ever been my good fortune to listen. I rank him with Charles Dickens, with the late Lord Granville, with James Russell Lowell, and with Chauncey Depew, and I do not know that I could say anything higher in his praise.

Now, the art of after-dinner speaking is not one in which it is given to all orators to succeed. Perhaps it would not be unreasonable to say that a man who is a really successful after-dinner speaker is seldom a great political orator. Gladstone never showed to great advantage as an after-dinner speaker, nor did John Bright, nor did Disraeli. But Lord Rosebery, as we all know, has made speeches in the House of Lords and on the political platform which have completely carried with them audiences accustomed to hear some of the most eloquent orators of the day. Then again, we all know that Lord Rosebery has delivered addresses on great ceremonial occasions, say on the unveiling of a statue to Burke or the opening of a monument to Burns, which might fairly be described as masterpieces of thought, and culture, and eloquence. In fact, we have come to expect so much from Lord Rosebery, when he undertakes any public duty which involves the making of a speech, that I wonder that we are not sometimes disappointed, and yet I cannot remember any occasion when we were disappointed. Lord Rosebery has in fact to contend against the difficulty which stands in the way

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of any man who tries to do a great many things and does a great many things well. The natural inclination of each of us is to think that there must be something superficial about the successes of such a man, and that because he does so many things well it may be taken for granted that he never could do anything supremely well. Now, I am not at present concerned to enter into any consideration of Lord Rosebery's capacity to become a great political leader, and moreover I hope that the best of his political career is still before him, and that if it should come into his mind to concentrate his intellect and his energies on one special purpose he will be able to prove that the capacity to do many things well does not necessarily preclude a man from complete success in some one field of action.

Lord Rosebery does not, so far as I know, go in for being a great reader in the Johnsonian sense of grappling with whole libraries. But his reading is certainly more wide-spread and more various than that of most reading men whom I know or have known. I remember meeting Lord Rosebery at a dinner-party given in the House of Commons some years ago, at which a number of politicians, and scholars, and authors, and lawyers were present. There was not a single man there who would not be called a lover of reading, and I only forbear to mention the names of the guests because nearly all broke down on a certain question of literature and history which was raised by an ingenious member of the company. The talk happened to turn on a posthumous novel by the late Lord Strangford which had been recently published. The novel was called 'Angela Pisani,' and it may be as well to remind some of my readers that the author was the George Smythe who was once a distinguished member of that

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‘Young England’ group of politicians to which Disraeli and the Lord John Manners of that day belonged; the George Smythe who was said to have occasionally delivered blank-verse speeches in the House of Commons. Now, the novel of ‘Angela Pisani’ is full of recondite literary and historical allusions; its author delighted to revel in such perverse ingenuity for the bewilderment of his readers. One of our company cited a comparison made by somebody in the novel, and he called upon any guest present to give an explanation of the comparison if he could. He who propounded the conundrum professed to have himself plucked out the heart of its mystery, and he challenged any of us to give the solution. He added with grim and scornful humour the request, ‘Now, please don’t all of you call out the answer together.’ The caution was superfluous, as he well knew it would be; we all gave it up except Lord Rosebery. He explained the allusion with perfect accuracy. Now, I do not mean to make too much of this triumph of reading and memory, but I think it was somewhat remarkable that a man who had so many various pursuits to occupy his time and his thoughts should have got at the meaning of an allusion which had completely puzzled so many professional authors and scholars. I dare say Lord Rosebery has forgotten all about the incident long ago, but to my mind it was a curious illustration of that peculiar mental capacity which can spread itself out over so many fields, and can yet pick up with such precision, and at a moment’s notice, any object sought in any one of them.

It has been my good fortune to meet Lord Rosebery often, to enjoy his hospitality in London and at Dalmeny, and it is mere commonplace to say that nobody ever talked to him on any subject without getting some

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fresh idea or seeing some familiar subject put in a new light. Lord Rosebery is emphatically one of the men whom I, as a selfish politician, must grudge to the House of Lords. I am not now raising any question as to the constitutional advantages or disadvantages of a House of Lords; I am not arguing as to the merits or the demerits in the principle of hereditary legislation; I am willing for the present to leave unanswered Franklin's question why there should be hereditary legislators any more than there should be hereditary mathematicians. I do not invite my readers to end the Lords or to mend them, or to leave them unended and unended. All I have to say just now is, that I think Lord Rosebery would have a better field for the exercise of his political and oratorical capacity in the House of Commons than he has in the House of Lords, and I regret that the Chamber which comes in the end to settle everything should not have the advantage of Lord Rosebery's presence and his eloquence. Perhaps I may borrow an idea from Lord Rosebery himself, and say that if there are to be predominant partners in the business of legislation, especially where Ireland is concerned, I should like to have the ablest of them in that part of the premises where the practical work of the firm is carried on. I have heard many of Lord Rosebery's speeches in the House of Lords, and I must admit that they were admirably suited to the genius of the place, and that they would have secured the approval, or, at all events, the admiration of Brougham or Lyndhurst, or that Lord Derby who in his earlier days was called the Rupert of debate; but none the less, or perhaps all the more, did I feel a regret that such a Parliamentary orator should not have a chance of addressing himself to an assembly where a division counts for something,

and where debate is a recognised influence on the feelings of the public and the destinies of the people.

I wonder whether there would be any use in my endeavouring elaborately to convince my readers that it is not any consideration of recent political events which induces me to associate the name of Lord Rosebery with that of Sir William Harcourt. My recollection of Sir William Harcourt, however, goes back to a period long before that at which I first became personally acquainted with Lord Rosebery. I first heard of Harcourt as one of the advocates engaged in the Crawley court-martial case, which made so much stir at the time. Harcourt conducted the defence of Colonel Crawley, who was charged with conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, and was acquitted of the charge. A friend of mine, who was an advocate by profession, who was then also a newspaper writer, who since that time held high position in her Majesty's Colonial Service, and died some years ago, was present at the sittings of the court martial, and told me to look out for Vernon Harcourt, as he was then called, because he felt satisfied that Harcourt was destined to play a great part in public life if he should turn his attention that way. This was so long ago as 1863, and I think it was a good hit on the part of my friend, who up to that time had known as little as I did about Vernon Harcourt. After that we all began to know that Harcourt was the author of the famous letters in the ‘Times’ signed ‘Historicus,’ and that he was a writer in the ‘Saturday Review,’ and then he became a public man, and the rest of his career is open to the judgment of all of us. My personal acquaintance with Sir William Harcourt began with the day when I first entered the House of Commons as a member; and from that

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time to this I have, of course, been in the habit of meeting him. Now, it can hardly be considered an invasion of the courteous restraints imposed on the criticism of public men still living, if I say that the common impression of Sir William Harcourt is that he is a somewhat masterful and overbearing person, inclined to magnify his office when he is in office, and not disposed to put himself out of his way on behalf of persons from whom he has little likelihood of any return service. I mention this common impression only because it gives me an opportunity of saying that my own personal experience enables me to tell quite a different story.

While Sir William Harcourt was acting as Home Secretary for the first time, under Mr. Gladstone, it so happened that the Irish Nationalist members, of whom I was one, were brought into constant antagonism with the occupants of the Treasury Bench. Our bitterest obstruction warfare was carried on under Parnell, during the years from 1880 to 1884 or 1885. Sir William Harcourt was, after Gladstone himself, the strongest fighting man on the Treasury Bench. He delighted in hard hitting, and he did not seem to grumble when he received hard hits in return. He stood up to Parnell many a time, and when I summoned up courage enough to assail him I need hardly say that he gave me a great deal better than I had brought. During the most heated period of that warfare I had on three or four occasions to make application to Sir William Harcourt, as Home Secretary, for some exercise of his official authority on behalf of entirely unknown and uninfluential applicants who knew no other member of the House of Commons. All that I had to ask of Sir William in each of these cases was for a slight relaxation of the prison rules regulating a prisoner's opportunity of communicating

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with his relatives in the outer world. I did not, of course, ask or expect any favour from the Home Secretary, but I wished to call his attention to the entirely exceptional nature of the conditions which in each case might seem to justify a temporary relaxation of the rigours of prison discipline. Now this was exactly a condition of things which would have enabled an ungenerous and overbearing man to make short work of an application addressed to him by one who had no claim whatever on his favour or even on his consideration. The Home Secretary had only to say that he could not interfere with the ordinary course of prison discipline and there was an end to the matter. I could not possibly persuade myself that I had the slightest reason to complain if I had received such an answer. My friends and I had made ourselves as troublesome as we could to the Government, and I, like others of us, had had sharp and angry personal altercation across the floor of the House with Sir William Harcourt. Nothing, however, could have been more considerate and more kindly than the Home Secretary's manner of dealing with each of my applications. He sent for me, he gave me a most patient hearing, he went out of his way to make himself acquainted with the circumstances of each case, and to find out if there was anything exceptional in each which would justify any relaxation of the ordinary rules.

I do not now remember the facts of all the cases, and I do not even remember whether Sir William Harcourt was able to comply with my request in each of them. The only one about which I have any clear recollection was that of an American youth who had got into some trouble in this country—a trouble which had nothing to do with politics, but only with youthful folly and

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heedlessness, and bad company — and whose mother was anxious that he might have an interview with a private friend of hers in the hope and with the faith that she might, through this channel, receive an assurance from her son's own lips that he had not committed himself to a course of crime. The prisoner's mother was in America, and had only one friend in London. This friend made application, in the first instance, to the American Minister at the Court of St. James's, and the American Minister declined to have anything to do with it, on the ground that he had no authority to make any such application to the Home Secretary. The friend knew nothing of me but my name, and on the strength of that knowledge only addressed the application to me. Sir William Harcourt entered into the subject with the most evident anxiety to do all that his duty would allow him to do in order to meet the wish of the poor mother. With all the pressure of his Parliamentary and official duties he found time to inquire into the case, and I believe the request was granted as far as the conditions of prison discipline made it possible for him to grant it. Now, all this time we were fighting hard night after night in the House of Commons, and Sir William Harcourt knew very well that he had nothing whatever to gain by striving to conciliate so insignificant a person as myself. I do not suppose he has any recollection whatever of the requests that I made to him, or the manner in which he disposed of them, but I could not possibly forget the kindness and the sympathetic spirit in which he received my troublesome applications.

During the years that followed I used to have frequent opportunities of meeting Harcourt in private, and I always found in him a peculiar quality of sympathy which we do not commonly expect to meet in natures

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of so decidedly combative a turn. I do not think the House of Commons has held in my time a combatant of what might be called the ‘slogging’ order more effective than Sir William Harcourt. I know there are critics who object to his quotations, and who insist that these quotations are usually lacking in novelty and freshness, and I am afraid that I have occasionally ventured on some such criticism myself, but then — go to — is it not part of the business of a debater to use the language and the quotations which tell best with his listeners? The House of Commons does not readily rise to a new quotation — it likes something which has a familiar sound, and which exacts no time for mental cogitation. Only your great masters of exalted eloquence, like Gladstone or Bright, can venture safely on a new quotation. Therefore I think it might be fairly argued that Sir William adapts himself to his audience, and does not see that there is any advantage gained by delighting one in ten and merely bewildering the other nine, and setting them to ask hurriedly of each other, ‘What did he mean by that?’ I sat one night at a dinner-party at which several members of Parliament were guests, and where speeches were made, although no reporters were present, and I well recollect how one flippant member of the House of Commons, in the course of his speech, wished to convey the idea of some conjunction of events so remote and distant as to be quite beyond the range of human anticipation. ‘It will come to pass,’ he declared, ‘on the day when Bobby Spencer wears an old hat, or Sir William Harcourt brings out a new quotation.’ The company seemed to think that this was indeed the ‘Never, never,’ such as the heroine of ‘Locksley Hall’ was destined to hear ‘Whispered through the phantom years.’

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Certainly no one can say that if Sir William does not bring forth new quotations it is from any lack either of reading or of readiness; nobody can reply to a thrust in debate more readily than Harcourt can; the man who ventures to interrupt him in the course of a speech is sure to receive a flashing repartee which will make him sorry he spoke. No one can have met Sir William Harcourt in private without being impressed by his resources of humour, of reading, and of illustration. I remember meeting Sir William one day at the house of a London lady, a Conservative in politics, and a devoted member of the Established Church. This lady, however, had a brother-in-law who went over to the Catholic Church and became a distinguished Catholic priest. There was a considerable group of persons in the drawing-room, and among them was the brother-in-law. A day or two before, the newspapers had given an account of the birth of a new member of the royal family, and the fact had been mentioned that a leading member of the Government had been late in presenting himself on that auspicious occasion. 'Surely,' said the lady of the house, 'it is not expected any longer that the Government should be represented in such a place and at such a time?' All eyes were turned on Sir William Harcourt, as if he were expected to give an authoritative answer to the question. Sir William replied, with a solemn countenance and with all the manner of one who feels that he is dealing with a subject of grave consideration, 'I do not know how we can dispense with such precautions in days like ours, when we meet with clever and audacious Jesuits like my friend beside me in houses where the Protestant succession might be fondly supposed to be an object of paramount interest.' No one laughed at the unexpected joke more heartily or

more cheerily than the brother-in-law of the hostess. There was genuine humour in this seizure of a chance presence to suggest that the days of wooden shoes and warming-pans were not yet quite over.

Before Sir William Harcourt became Chancellor of the Exchequer he held office, I need hardly say, as Solicitor-General under Mr. Gladstone, and it was on accepting that office that he was made a knight. The story went in Parliamentary groups that Sir William rather demurred to the title — a title given on various State occasions to provincial mayors. Mr. Gladstone — so the legend has it — explained that it was the invariable custom to bestow a knighthood on the Solicitor-General. ‘Then’ — still goes the tradition — said the undaunted Harcourt, ‘why don’t you knight all the members of your Government? See how some of them will like it!’ I cannot personally vouch for the truth of this story, but I can personally vouch for the fact that it was commonly told at the time, and commonly believed. Readers of history will remember that Gibbon lays it down as a canon of criticism that if a story is started long after the date of its alleged occurrence, and if it had never been heard of by any contemporary, it may be put down as a mere invention. All I can answer for is that the story about Sir William Harcourt and his knighthood was, as I have said, commonly told at the time and commonly believed.

When Mr. Gladstone came into power again, Sir William Harcourt became once more a member of the Liberal Government. But by that time he had quite put away all thought of persevering in his legal career, had given up all notions of the Lord Chancellorship, on which some people imagined that, for family and traditional reasons, his mind had been set, and he accepted

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the office of Home Secretary. Of course there is no actual reason why a lawyer who becomes Home Secretary should not afterwards become Lord Chancellor, if fortune puts the opportunity in his way. But in the case of Sir William Harcourt it was distinctly understood that when he accepted the office of Home Secretary he was withdrawing once and for all from the path of legal promotion. He had chosen his ground, and for my part I think he had chosen it well. Sir William reached almost his highest level when he became for the first time Chancellor of the Exchequer. Then he suddenly displayed a genius for finance and the arrangement and equipoise of taxation such as I believe his warmest admirers had not previously given him credit for. But it was not until he entered on the same office for a second time that he showed a real constructive originality in dealing with schemes of taxation. Then he brought forward his Budget, which roused enthusiasm on the one side and hostility on the other, to an extent which we had been accustomed to associate only with the budgets of Mr. Gladstone. I am speaking, of course, of his manner of dealing with what are called the Death Duties. In point of fact Sir William Harcourt put into organisation and practice the principle that persons who have large fortunes left to them ought to contribute to the revenues of the State in a greater proportion than those persons who have small fortunes or modest legacies bequeathed to them. Even when the hostility was raging at its highest, some of us, perhaps out of our very ignorance, found it hard to understand where the grievance came in. Sir William Harcourt carried his point and carried his principle, and it is not likely, I think, to be unsettled by any future Parliament.

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I do not regard even that success as the zenith of Sir William Harcourt's career. I never thought he showed to greater advantage than when, after Mr. Gladstone's retirement from public life and the subsequent defeat of the Liberal Party at the Elections, he came back to the House of Commons as Leader of the Opposition. A more depressing, a more forlorn condition could hardly be imagined for the leader of what was once a great political party. The Liberals were routed, horse, foot, and artillery, and it might have seemed a hopeless task to try and inspire them with any new courage or fighting power. Sir William Harcourt did undoubtedly succeed in supplying them with these feelings and qualities. I can never remember an occasion when the Liberal Party in the House of Commons was so low down in prospects and in hopes. Still, it cannot be questioned that Sir William Harcourt succeeded in bringing them back to fighting mood and to tenacity of purpose. Then came out in him that supreme quality of a fighting politician to which I have already made allusion. He put fire into the hearts of his colleagues and his followers, and he made them ready to meet the enemy on any occasion, even where the chances of success seemed most completely out of the order of practical possibilities. Take, for example, one great instance. The most important measure of the new Conservative Government in its first session was the Education Bill. It had its many defects and faults, but I think for the interests which my party especially represented it was a good deal better than nothing. But I am not now taking into account my own point of view. I am thinking only of the splendid energy and the indomitable patience with which Sir William Harcourt fought against that measure. The Government had an enor-

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mous majority. The Liberals were in a hopeless minority. Yet, all the same, Sir William Harcourt contrived to defeat the Education Bill, or at least to compel the Government to withdraw it for a time. The whole of the session was practically wasted over it, and the Government came out of its first season of office with heavily damaged reputation.

That, I think, was the most remarkable period in the whole of Sir William Harcourt's active and energetic life. He put new heart into his followers, and he led with marvellous vigour and composure what must have often seemed even to him a mere forlorn hope. In that first struggle with the new Tory Government he was completely successful, for the time at least. He accomplished the success merely by debating every clause in the Bill and every line in every clause. The measure was naturally and necessarily a very complex affair, full of the minutest details, and of details many of which had a varied local application. It therefore lent itself freely to long and inevitable controversy. Seeing what the Government wanted to do, the measure could not possibly have avoided giving such chances of controversy, but not every Liberal leader would have been able to avail himself of the chances to the same extent and to have accomplished the same result. Most men in Sir William Harcourt's place would have made up their minds that any substantial opposition to the Government was wholly out of the question, and would have contented themselves with a protest and two or three full-dress debates.

Some years ago I went with my daughter to a dinner-party in a London house. It was my daughter's first season, and she had not yet made the personal acquaintance of many public men. When we were returning

homeward she asked me, with much appearance of interest, who was the young man by whom she had been taken in to dinner. Her surprise was great when I told her that the ‘young man’ was named John Morley. John Morley certainly did look a very young man at the time, and I beg to be understood that I do not mean to say that John Morley looks a very old man even now. My daughter was amazed at my answer, and declared that she was very glad she had not known who her next-door neighbour was, for she said that if she had known she could never have summoned up the courage to approach him with any trivial or ordinary topics of conversation. Yet if she had known him, she need not have felt in the least alarmed, for John Morley is able to make himself a charming companion to any intelligent creature.

There is a rather common idea about John Morley, that he is wholly absorbed in the severer pursuits of loftier intellects, and that he cannot bring himself to take any interest in the common objects of everyday life. There is another idea about him which sets him up as a cold and passionless person whom no keenness of argument can stir even into a momentary heat of temper. I do not know which of the two common ideas is, according to my observation and experience, the more absurd. For neither is there, so far as my judgment goes, the slightest foundation. John Morley’s long and varied experience as a journalist would necessarily have given him, even if it had not come to him by nature, the faculty of taking an interest in any topic of conversation which could possibly hold the attention of educated mortals. Then again Morley seems to me to be a man of a peculiarly quick and sensitive temperament, who readily fires up with the

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heat of any argument, and is kept moving in discussion, quite as much by his feelings as by his reason. I remember well that while he was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland some of us Irish Nationalist members used to have frequent conferences with him in his private room at the House of Commons. As may easily be imagined, we did not always approve of what his Government was doing in Ireland, and as may be easily imagined, too, he was not always able to accept our suggestions or to acknowledge the justice of our remonstrances. Now we had in our party a very able man, a very sincere man, a man who was a perfect master of all the information that related to the state of Ireland, and who had a most remarkable gift of exposition and of argument. Most of us were very anxious that this one of our colleagues should, as often as possible, be the spokesman of the party when we had occasion to argue with Mr. Morley. But there was a certain trouble in the way. Mr. Morley and our colleague had many intellectual qualities in common, but they had also one quality of temperament in common which made them rather unsuitable as disputants. Both men were intensely nervous, quick, and excitable; both were sensitive to the highest degree; both were inclined to resent any ill-considered phrase and, if I may put it so, to take offence where no offence might have been meant. Therefore we found it inconvenient to bring them together, for though each man was equally sincere, just, and single-minded, and although the two men had in whatever discussion absolutely the same object in view — the object of securing justice for Irish claims — yet the discussion that had to be conducted between two such disputants was apt to become explosive. I hope I shall not be considered ill-natured

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towards either of my friends because I have ventured to introduce this little scrap of personal observation into my reminiscences. I have been led into it because I am anxious, if I can, to dispel the common idea that John Morley is a sort of frozen-up philosopher who was born without, or has trained himself out of, all warmth of emotion, all quickness of sympathy, all nervous impulse and all the impulses of a quick emotional temperament. I may frankly say that I should not admire my friend John Morley half as much as I do if he had not that generous weakness, that unphilosophic sensitiveness which I have ventured to ascribe to him.

My first acquaintance with Morley was made while he was editor of the ‘Fortnightly Review.’ I had been making a study of the working of the Permissive Laws, as they are called, in the United States, and I was anxious that the observations that I had made and the conclusions that I had formed should be brought under the notice of the public of these countries. The ‘Fortnightly Review’ seemed to me the best possible medium for the publication of my views, and I sent an article to Mr. Morley, who was good enough to give it a place in one of the numbers of his periodical. An acquaintance began then, which soon deepened into what I hope I may call friendship, a friendship, I trust, that is likely to last our time. When it became known that Mr. Morley was about to enter the House of Commons a good many members of the House made up their minds in anticipation as to the chances of his success there. There was a general impression at that time that a man who had made a reputation as a writer was certain to fail in making his reputation as a Parliamentary debater. We have changed our minds a good deal since then, but at the time of which I am now speaking it

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passed as a sort of axiom with most members of the House of Commons that good writing meant bad speaking. How such an axiom ever came to establish itself I do not know, for long before John Morley's Parliamentary days we had examples the other way in the case of Disraeli, of Bulwer Lytton, of William Johnson Fox, and of many other writers who had to be recognised as distinctly successful in Parliamentary debate. Nevertheless the idea was still settled in the minds of most persons, and especially of dull persons, about the time when it first became known that John Morley was to become a Parliamentary candidate. Some years before, when Mr. Leonard Courtney was first elected as the representative of a Parliamentary constituency, I remember having a talk with an experienced member of the House who set himself up as an authority on all political questions. 'Mark my words,' he said to me with an air of portentous wisdom, 'Courtney will be a dead failure in the House of Commons.' I did mark his words, and Courtney was not a dead failure, but a very live success, in the House of Commons. Predictions of much the same kind were oracularly given forth in the instance of John Morley. I have a very clear recollection of Morley's first speech in the House. Many of those who had foredoomed him, as a literary man, to failure were at first a little puzzled by his fluency, by the precision of his argument, and by his entire self-possession. Then there came some interruptions — interruptions chiefly made by men who were rather displeased at the notion that a writer in books and newspapers should come there to instruct them, and who thought that at all events he should have shown some signs of trepidation in his new and trying position. Morley took every interruption as it came, and made

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reply to each with the promptness and the coolness of a practised Parliamentary debater. I think the House felt satisfied in general that another man of Parliamentary capacity had found his way into the assembly.

Much the same happened at a still later time in the case of my friend Mr. Herbert Paul, when it was announced that he was a candidate for one of the divisions of Edinburgh. Herbert Paul had long been known as one of the most brilliant and accomplished newspaper writers of his day. Many sagacious persons in the House of Commons shook their heads over him, and assured me that my friend Paul was certain to be a Parliamentary failure. Paul's very first speech in the House, however, satisfied everybody who heard it that a new debater of genuine capacity and great promise had found his way into the representative Chamber. The speech addressed itself directly and altogether to the actual question then under debate, and had nothing to do with the prepared conventionalities of the ordinary maiden effort. On every occasion after when Paul took part in debate he did more and more to satisfy the House that it had gained a real advantage by his presence. He lost his seat at the General Election of 1895, but he is sure to find a place in the House again before long, and his return will be welcomed by everyone on either side of Mr. Speaker's chair who can appreciate the combination of keen caustic humour, vigorous common sense, and brilliant Parliamentary style.

In most cases a first speech in the House of Commons counts for little or nothing as a test of future success. The maiden speech is usually listened to with tolerant good humour. It is regarded as a sort of initiatory ceremonial, and nothing more. In itself it does not

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often invite criticism or provoke controversy, it is generally a carefully prepared discourse meant to propitiate, and is taken accordingly. But John Morley had the good fortune to meet with unwonted and unexpected interruption, and the interruption gave him a chance of showing what he could do. From that time his reputation in Parliament grew steadily higher and higher. He has never aimed at the higher successes of Parliamentary eloquence, and he is probably, at this day, a more commanding speaker on the public platform than in the House of Commons. But there cannot be the slightest doubt that he ranks among the foremost debaters in the House, and he has proved again and again that he can strike into any part of a debate and can criticise one by one the arguments of the opponent who has gone before him as effectively and thoroughly as if he had had the chance of spending hours in studying them. He is known to be a politician with convictions, and even his political adversaries think all the more of him on that account. I heard it once said that Morley seemed the sort of man who would be more at home in a French Legislative Chamber than in the House of Commons; and I suppose the explanation of the suggestion was to be found in the old-fashioned idea that the House of Commons is only a suitable place for good party men, and that a politician who has anything to do with philosophical or historical convictions is rather out of his element there, especially if he has anything of what is called a literary style, and takes any pains about the finishing of his sentences. I do not know that Morley would have much reason to complain of such criticism, supposing it to have the meaning I have ventured to apply to it, and in any case I do not think that his Parliamentary style shows much of the laboured art which

might be supposed to belong to a writer of books. Morley can be as easy and colloquial as any member of the House when the question under discussion is one which favours such a mode of dealing with it, and he can rise into passages of genuine fervour and eloquence when the subject appeals to his intellect and his feelings, and the course of the debate inspires his generous sensitive temperament with emotion. I can quite understand the feeling which has made some of Morley's warmest admirers and closest friends regret that he should have interrupted his studies and his work as a writer of books in order to devote himself to the business of politics. Naturally some of us want more of his books, and complain that while the whole Treasury Bench, or the Front Opposition Bench, or both together, could not without him have given us such a *Life of Burke* or of *Cobden*, the Government and the Opposition would between them have managed to carry on the business of the country in much the same way even if he had never entered Parliament. But I think the fact that Morley was willing to enter Parliament, and was able to make a name and a place for himself there, may be taken as proof that he had special qualities for such a work which he had no right to leave unused. At all events we have got some books from him which cannot be taken from us, and I trust we shall have the *Life of Gladstone* also; and if, at the same time, he can maintain his position and do his work in Parliament and in administration, the country has all the gain and no one has any fair ground for grumbling.

I have myself personally only one cause of complaint, one sense of grievance against John Morley, and my resentment has to do only with literature, and not with politics. I have never told Morley in private the

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ground of my one complaint against him. If he should happen to read this page he will then learn it for the first time. I still fondly hope that it may cause no serious interruption to our friendship. The grievance which I cherish is founded on the belief that he has not done justice to the character of Julie, the 'divine Julie' as she has been called, the heroine of the 'Nouvelle Héloïse,' in his book on Rousseau. Morley, as it seems to me, treats that young woman as if she had gone astray out of 'pure divilment,' to quote an expression once used to me by a poor countryman of my own, and does not make allowance for the one overmastering temptation which seemed to give her a chance of compelling her proud father to consent to her marriage with her lover. There! I have set forth my single ground of complaint against John Morley, and I think that after many years of frequent co-operation and occasional antagonism in political life it is not a grievance likely to engender implacable animosity.

CHAPTER XL

SOME IRISH MEMBERS

I KNEW John Dillon for some years before he had entered Parliament. I knew his father when I was a very young man; and, much later, when after a long residence first in France and then in the United States, he had returned to his own country and was elected to the House of Commons as representative of the county of Tipperary. John Dillon the elder — John Blake Dillon, to give him his full name — was in every way a remarkable man. He was remarkable in appearance as well as in capacity and in character. He was a barrister in Dublin with a large practice, and held a high social position in the Irish capital. He was associated with Charles Gavan Duffy in the founding of the once famous newspaper 'The Nation.' He took a prominent part in the 'Young Ireland' movement which led to the insurrection of 1848, and it has to be said of him that while he strongly discouraged the idea of an armed rebellion, and had no faith in the possibility of Ireland's succeeding by any movement of insurrection, yet when Smith O'Brien risked Ireland's chances in the open field, he cast in his lot with his leader and stood by his side during the abortive rising in Tipperary. After the failure of that attempt Dillon escaped to France, and went from France to America, where he lived for several years, and practised successfully at the Bar. He

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was a very tall man, with dark hair and sallow complexion, and a distinctly commanding presence. When the exiles of 1848 were allowed to return to their own country Dillon came back, as I have said, and entered once more into political life. In the House of Commons he soon won friends among the English Liberals of the more advanced order, and in particular he secured the confidence, the admiration, and the friendship of John Bright.

I was at that time editor of the 'Morning Star,' and Dillon came to see me many times, and we had long talks over the condition of Ireland and her political prospects. Dillon formed the idea of an alliance between the advanced Liberals of Great Britain and the Irish Nationalist representatives, for the purpose of common action on all questions that concerned the political and social welfare of Ireland. I think I was one of the first to whom he made known this idea, and it seemed to me to contain the germs of a most desirable political project. The Liberal members who then especially looked up to the leadership of Bright were almost all in deep sympathy with Ireland, and were willing to do everything in their power to secure for her an improved agricultural system, religious equality, and an extended suffrage. The definite idea of Home Rule had not yet come up, but I may say that the best of the men who followed John Bright at that time became devoted followers of Gladstone in all his efforts for the regeneration of Ireland. The elder Dillon's idea of an alliance between English and Scotch Radicals and Irish Nationalists, for the improvement of Ireland's agricultural and political condition, found favour with these men, and obtained the cordial approval of Bright. It was arranged that Bright should be invited to Ireland,

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and that a welcoming banquet should be given to him in Dublin, at which Dillon was to preside. The banquet took place, and Bright made one of his most magnificent speeches there. But Dillon did not preside; fate had darkly intervened, and almost on the very eve of the banquet Dillon was attacked by a sudden fit of illness which ended in his death. Bright devoted to his memory and his career a tribute in his speech at the banquet which thrilled all who heard it or who only read it by its noble and its generous eloquence. Even Dillon's political opponents felt that such a tribute was well deserved by such a man.

The younger Dillon — the John Dillon of the present day — was not likely, having been brought up by such a father, to keep comfortably out of the field of Irish politics. I met the younger Dillon for the first time in London at the house of Henry W. Lucy, and with that first meeting began a personal friendship which has gone on increasing and strengthening ever since. A former political colleague of John Dillon's, who has since set up a political party of his own, is reported to have described the late leader of the Irish Party as a 'melancholy humbug.' The description, I suppose, was not intended to be taken too seriously, and in any case it has two defects which somewhat mar its completeness. John Dillon is not 'melancholy,' and he is not a 'humbug.' He probably never indulged in affectation or hypocrisy, or sham or humbug of any kind in all his life. The melancholy of his personal appearance I grant; and it was turned to amusing account by one of the artists in 'Punch,' who pictured a Parliamentary fancy ball wherein Dillon figured in the character of Hamlet, with the traditional inky cloak, and the hat with the sable plumes. The tall slender figure, the

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sallow complexion, the deep, dark eyes, dark as those of an Italian or a Spaniard, and the hair that once was like what Milton calls 'the raven down of darkness,' now somewhat streaked with grey, and the set expression of face—all these personal characteristics would undoubtedly suggest to an ordinary spectator the idea of a melancholy man. But Mr. Dillon is in private life, or indeed in public life for that matter, anything but melancholy. He is genial, he is pleasant in talk, he enjoys a good joke, and can tell an amusing story. He has a hopeful nature, and a temper which nothing can ruffle. He is a very sociable man, enjoys London life and London society, dines out a great deal, and is a very welcome guest at English dinner-tables, and on the whole contrives to knock a good deal of enjoyment out of life, despite the intense, incessant political worries and cares and troubles to which his peculiar public position subjects him.

Mr. Dillon is essentially a fair-minded man, an equal-minded man, and I do not believe he would consciously allow an injustice to be done even to Mr. Healy. In the tribute which John Bright paid to the elder John Dillon, I remember well that he described him as above all things a just man. I can say the same for the younger Dillon. I have never met a man more thoroughly single-minded. I have never met one of whom I could more fully believe that his actions and his words were invariably dictated by a sense of public duty. Mr. Dillon was educated for the medical profession, and still preserves a very good knowledge of its business, but he has, of course, for nearly twenty years been wholly absorbed in the Irish national cause. His patriotic feeling is, as Walter Scott said of his own Jacobite inclinations, in his blood.

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John Dillon has absolutely given himself up to the service of Ireland. He is far indeed from being a rich man, but he is able to do without any attempt at working for a living, and I have no doubt he spends a good deal of money in trying to help evicted tenants, and in other ways to succour distressed Irish people.

Mr. Dillon is a very well read man, but he never talks of his reading unless you directly draw him out on the subject. He has also been a great traveller, but he never talks of his travels unless you ask him for information about some far-off region with which he is personally acquainted. He knows the United States from east to west, and from north to south. He lived for a considerable time on a ranche in Colorado. He is well acquainted with Canada, and has a thorough knowledge of the Australian colonies. He has been in the island where Robert Louis Stevenson lived and died. He has a keen and retentive memory, and can tell you how to go from this part to that part of New Zealand or Queensland as readily and accurately as if he were a Murray's guide-book. Of course he is familiar with all the ordinary regions of travel in Europe and Egypt and the nearer East generally. As to his reading, it is very varied both in science and in literature. His taste inclines him to admire the greatest in every style, whatever the form may be. He is an enthusiast about Goethe and an enthusiast about Burns. He finds great delight in the frequent reading of Herodotus. I have a great affection for Herodotus myself, and it has happened more than once that when Dillon and I were sitting deep in converse in the smoking-room of the House of Commons some English member has come up and said good-humouredly: 'Now I am sure you two fellows are plotting something terrible against the Government,'

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while as a matter of fact we two fellows were doing nothing worse than comparing our recollections of the familiar author. Dillon is a great book-buyer, but not in the ordinary sense of the phrase. He does not care about a book merely because it is in a first edition or because it is in any peculiar edition. To quote once again a saying of Professor Freeman to me, which I have quoted already in these pages, 'a book is to him an instrument and not a fetich.' He likes to buy books if he likes the books, and it is his way not to get complete enjoyment out of any book that is lent to him and has to be given back within some more or less definite time. He wants to have his book always with him, so that he can take it up and study it whenever inclination suggests, and a rare hour of leisure allows. His qualifications for political life are a complete knowledge of all the subjects that concern the welfare of Ireland, and an acquaintance with the conditions of many other countries which enables him to compare and contrast and draw conclusions; a great natural ability, well trained by long experience; a ready gift of speech, and an indomitable courage. He is not an orator, and does not attempt to be, although he can always impress a great public meeting in Ireland or in Great Britain, and he has often made a deep impression on the House of Commons, more perhaps by his earnestness, his sincerity, and his knowledge of facts than by his eloquence. He is not a Parliamentary debater in the sense that Mr. Sexton was or the sense that Mr. Healy is. He does not profess to be much of a tactician, although he quite appreciates the value of tactics in Parliamentary as in other warfare. I think his commanding position in politics is due to force of character rather than to what might be called mere cleverness or artifice of any kind.

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He is certainly well esteemed in the House of Commons by Tory politicians as well as by Liberals, and I have never heard an unkindly word said of him by any but a few, a very few, of his own countrymen.

John Dillon, as everybody knows, has lately resigned the leadership of the Irish Nationalist Party in the House of Commons, and has announced that he will not allow himself to be put in nomination for any office in the party during the existence of the present Parliament. It is no part of my plan in writing this book to enter into consideration of any purely political questions: I shall only say that I feel well assured that he had the best public and patriotic reasons for thus voluntarily reducing himself to the ranks of his party, and that I do not suppose he has taken the step with anything like a light heart. He remains at his post as an active member of the Irish Nationalist party, and I feel sure that his withdrawal from the position of leader will not secure for him an additional hour of rest from the active work of political life. He will still devote himself, as he has ever done since he emerged from boyhood, to the service of that cause which his father served so unselfishly before him. No public man of his time has had a more disinterested or a more honourable career, and I think the voice of Great Britain, as well as of Ireland, would award him that praise.

Mr. Thomas Sexton must be included in this chapter, although he has ceased, for the present, to be an Irish member. He was an Irish member for fifteen years, and he is still young enough to have a long career before him and popular enough with his countrymen to be an Irish member again at any time when he may make up his mind to return to Parliamentary life. During his fifteen years of Irish membership Mr. Sexton was,

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from whatever point of view we take him, one of the most interesting figures in the House of Commons. Everyone who has paid any attention to politics is acquainted with his marvellous debating powers, and knows to what a remarkable height of eloquence he often rose under the impulse of strong and impassioned emotion. I think it is not too much to say that if a vote had been taken on the subject at any time within the last few years of Mr. Sexton's membership the great majority of the House would have rated him as the second among its orators and debaters; the first of course being Mr. Gladstone. Then again, like Mr. Gladstone, he was a perfect master of figures. He had not been many weeks in the House of Commons when he amazed his listeners by the extraordinary quickness and accuracy with which he could deal with whole masses of statistics. He was once interrupted and challenged on some question of finance by a member of the then existing Government. Mr. Sexton rattled through a rapid succession of additions, multiplications, subtractions and percentages, and having at the close worked out his results, he metaphorically tossed them to his challenger with the quiet words, 'I think the Right Hon. gentleman will find these results correct,' which the Right Hon. gentleman afterwards frankly owned that he did. 'That is a wonderful young man you have got over from Ireland,' the late Sir Isaac Holden said to me of Sexton, one evening several years ago; 'I really don't know whether he is better at figures of rhetoric or figures of arithmetic.'

Sexton is one of the most genial of men. In the House of Commons he talked and joked with everybody. Political opponents as well as political friends were delighted to have a chat with him. He had a

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smile and a bright word for each and all of them. From every party or section or group in the House, he was sure to be consulted by somebody about the best means of shaping a notice of motion, the right way to put a question, how the rules of order would affect this or that course of procedure. In private conversation, he is, I think, even more brilliant than in public debate. It is not likely that the House of Commons holds now a man more variously gifted with the powers of a talker. An epigram, a happy flashing phrase, a strange fanciful conceit, all these come to his lips as naturally and readily as a platitude about the weather or the likelihood of a general election would come to the lips of another man. He is not a talker of the Johnsonian order—he does not want to keep all the talk to himself. He delights in the exchange of delicate, vivacious rapier thrusts. He has read much of literature, and is thoroughly well acquainted with Shakespeare. As in the case of nearly all Celtic natures, there is a deep suffusion of the poetic which gleams and glances out every now and then in his private talk, and, indeed, in his public speeches. Much as we all admired his Parliamentary eloquence, it must be said that those who never heard him talk in private have no adequate idea of the brilliancy of the man.

Yet Mr. Sexton is of all men the most unsocial in the ordinary sense of the word. He would meet and talk with anyone in Parliament. He is a splendid man of business and finance, as he proved in his two terms of office as Lord Mayor of Dublin; and a man of business has to mix in business with his fellows. But apart from the House of Commons or whatever public business he has been engaged upon, he has lived the life of a very hermit. He never dines out. He never goes

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out to luncheon. Among the most intimate friends he has, there are men at whose dinner-table he has never sat. People have given up even inviting him, for they know that he will not comply with the invitation. When a member of the House he was to be seen dining with some of his friends almost every day at a table in the room where strangers may not be brought, and with these friends he was always animated, and full of humorous and witty talk. But nothing could induce him to go into the room where strangers may be brought, and dine with his friends and some strangers there. In the members' smoking-room he was almost always the centre of a deeply interested group made up of men of all parties who delighted to exchange ideas with him and to listen to him. But he could not be prevailed upon to dine at any of their houses. When the session was over he would disappear, and his friends would know nothing more of him for a time. There was a belief among them that he went generally to some of the northern watering-places where no one was likely to know him, but no particular evidence can be produced to sustain the belief. His great enjoyments are coffee and cigars. He drinks no wine or spirits or malt liquor of any sort. At one time he used to be a great lover of the theatre, and he has an exquisite taste for dramatic art. But of late years he seems to have given up that enjoyment too. It is a curious paradox that a man so well qualified for society, and who finds such pleasure in talking with men of the House of Commons, should in all other ways lead the life of a recluse in London. Seldom has such a life of contrasting moods been known in the regions of Parliament.

Moods? Yes, there is where the trouble comes in. Up to the present a stranger reading these pages might

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be inclined to ask, 'Do you mean to tell us that Mr. Sexton has no faults?' Certainly there are no mean or ignoble faults about the man. No one could imagine him guilty of an unworthy ambition, or any desire to make profit by the downfall of any other man. He does not seem to care a straw for the making of money. When he was Lord Mayor of Dublin he found at the end of his two years of office that he had not spent all his salary. A considerable sum remained. He sent the balance at once to the municipal funds. His faults are in his moods, and they are probably ingrained in his nature. He is sensitive to the highest degree, and he hates the violence and vehemence that have sometimes degraded the debates of the House of Commons. No man in the House was better able to hold his own against any opponent; but if the fight became too rude and rough, his sensitive nature was offended by it, and he did not readily go into such strife again. A member of the Irish National party was heard once to say of himself that the only real qualification he had for public life was found in the fact that he was totally indifferent to anything that might be said against him. Mr. Sexton has too highly strung a nature to take things and men so easily. For anything in fair fight he is ready, but anything unfair or foul revolts him beyond the power of quiet endurance. There, again, is another paradox in him. He can be, when he likes, one of the hardest hitters; and if he is met in the same spirit as his own he can take the hardest blows given to him, and never think any the worse of his antagonist for giving it. But if anyone tries to hit below the belt, or slip the button off the rapier, Mr. Sexton is simply filled with loathing and disgust, and quits the arena where such offences are possible for even one man to commit.

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He is, indeed, as all his friends know, far too sensitive for his own happiness, and the House of Commons, with all its vigorous life, has not been able to shake the sensitiveness out of him. He is quick in resentment as he is quick in everything. He is not a man who has travelled much, or who would care to travel much. He has been a good deal in Paris and in other parts of France, and he has made one visit to the United States. But he takes no interest in wandering, and is probably not well qualified physically to bear fatigue, although in his earlier Parliamentary years he sat unmoved through many an all-night sitting. Should he return to the House of Commons, as I trust he may some day be induced to do, I venture to think that he will receive a cordial welcome from every member of the House, and that political opponents as well as political friends will regard his renewed presence as a distinct gain to the debating value of the representative Chamber.

Another brilliant member of the Irish National party was my late friend Alexander M. Sullivan, whose sudden break-down of health cut short a most promising political career which was closed altogether by death soon after his retirement from the House of Commons. His withdrawal from political life was too early, when we consider what his years were, but was all too late to give him any chance of recovering the health which had been broken by constant attendance on the House and by the cruel frequency of all-night sittings. Sullivan, like Sexton, was a debater who under inspiriting conditions rose to be an orator. The House took to him almost from the moment when he delivered his first speech there, and his rising was always the signal for close attention among the occupants of every bench. I remember sitting just behind Lord Randolph Churchill

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one night when Sullivan made a speech in support of some motion to which Lord Randolph's political opinions were absolutely hostile. When Sullivan had resumed his seat Lord Randolph turned round to me and said, 'Well now, making allowance for difference of opinion, is it possible to imagine anything finer than that?' Sullivan entered Parliament in the session of 1874, and, as I have said, his first speech proclaimed his success.

During that same session another man, an English member, achieved also a success which everyone who appreciated the conditions of Parliamentary life recognised at once as the promise and the pledge of a great career. This was Farrer Herschell, the late Lord Herschell, whose untimely death at Washington last February caused the deepest regret throughout his own country and all Europe and the United States. The success of Herschell in the House of Commons, coming much about the same time as that of Alexander Sullivan, caused some curious reflections among some of us who were close observers of Parliamentary life. I was not then a member of the House, but I was a constant writer of leading articles in the Press Gallery. Here were two men, each of whom in the same session had made a distinct and unmistakable success in the Legislative Chamber. Both were members of the Bar. One was an Englishman, the other an Irishman. Nothing could be more certain in the ordinary course of things than the rise of the Englishman to high position and high office. No Liberal Government could fail to take account of the abilities of a man like Herschell. Every position that a lawyer could fill was open to him, and was likely to be attained by him without the slightest sacrifice of his political principles. The other man was

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a member of the Irish Nationalist party, compelled by his political creed to take up a position of hostility to both the political parties, the representative of a cause which, at that time, was condemned alike by the leaders of the Liberals and the leaders of the Conservatives. If he had been an Irish member, like many other Irish members, not pledged to the policy of uncompromising Nationalism, there was no reason why he might not have obtained office in a Liberal administration. But at that time it was absolutely impossible that even a Liberal Government could have anything to do with an Irish Home Ruler, or that an Irish Home Ruler could have anything to do with a Liberal Government. The Englishman was, by the very condition of things, marked out for a career of increasing honour and dignity; the Irishman was destined to spend his days and nights in the advocacy of a cause which required of him unceasing toil and personal self-sacrifice; which condemned him to over-worked days and sleepless nights; and, in short, to poverty. It is needless to say that I am not finding fault with the honours conferred upon Herschell. No man ever won those honours more fairly, or gave his country better value for the rewards which she bestowed on him. I had the honour of knowing the late Lord Herschell well, and had nothing but admiration for his intellect, his eloquence, and his noble character. Nor do I feel any wonder at the fact that a Liberal Government of that day could not have made any offer of a place in an administration to Alexander Sullivan. The political conditions at the time would not have allowed such an offer to be made, and, of course, if the offer had been made it could not have been accepted. Still I could not but think that there must have been something wrong in the condition of

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things which thus excluded a gifted Irishman from his place in a career supposed to be open alike to all capable men who had made a mark in the House of Commons. Sullivan, of course, had the appreciation and the admiration of his own country to sustain him, and it is only fair to say that his talents received the full recognition of all parties and sections in the Legislative Chamber.

Mr. Gladstone was one of the first to appreciate Sullivan's capacity as a Parliamentary debater and to recognise the sincerity and the integrity of his character. Sullivan had a fine voice, with many melodious notes in it. He had a powerful declamatory style, and, like most men who succeeded in Parliamentary debate, he had such a readiness in the comprehension of all the essential points of a complicated argument that he often showed at his very best when he had to reply on the spur of the moment to some speaker who had just delivered his closing sentence. He was not by any means a politician of the more extreme order. He was a thorough constitutionalist, and he had a natural respect for the rules and the usages of the House of Commons. His was always a moderating influence, and he had a full faith in the final triumph of his cause by argument and by appeal to the good sense and the good feeling of the majority. He had many English friends who thoroughly understood and appreciated him, and he was a man who enjoyed social life to the full, although he was as austere in the cause of temperance as Sir Wilfrid Lawson himself. He had a rich fund of Irish humour, and not even Sir Wilfrid Lawson could excel him in the readiness to make and to enjoy a good joke. His animal spirits were for a long time so exuberant that he used to say himself he did not know how he could have

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kept himself down to a proper level of gravity if his dietary had included even the smallest allowance of alcoholic stimulant. I am afraid that the high animal spirits were not of long endurance. The House of Commons proved too much for him. He entered it just at the beginning of the terrible ten years of obstruction and of all-night sittings; he had to work hard to make a living all the while, and he would never allow himself the slightest relaxation from what he believed to be his Parliamentary duties. He had at last to withdraw from public life altogether, but, as I have said already, his withdrawal came too late to give him any fair chance of recovering his exhausted physical energies, and he died in what ought to have been the prime of his life. He was certainly one of the foremost debaters of the House during the years that he spent there, and his name will always have an honourable memory in Great Britain as well as in his own country, the country for which he strove so faithfully and sacrificed so much.

No one who paid any attention to Parliamentary life during the years which I am now describing is likely to have forgotten The O'Gorman Mahon. The House of Commons could show no more remarkable figure, nor had any member of the House gone through a more varied career. When I knew him he was a tall and stately old gentleman considerably over six feet in height, and standing as erect as a flag-staff. His head was crowned with a mass of thick white hair, and his eyes had in them a constant expression of almost boyish vivacity. He walked with the quick springy step of a young man, and no amount of physical fatigue seemed to have any effect on him. Nobody at the time I speak of had any precise idea as to The O'Gorman Mahon's

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age, but we had some facts to go on in forming our calculations. For instance, we all knew that the Act of Parliament allowing Roman Catholics to sit in the House of Commons was passed in 1829, and we also knew that that Act had been made inevitable by the election of Daniel O'Connell for Clare County in 1828. So far all was clear, and then we also knew that The O'Gorman Mahon was a landlord of influence in the county of Clare at the time of the great constitutional struggle, and that it was under his guidance and with his support O'Connell had become a candidate for the county. Here were then some facts to go on. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that we were discussing The O'Gorman Mahon's age in 1885, when he was sitting among the Irish Nationalists in the House of Commons. Then we had the unquestionable fact to go on that nearly sixty years before he had arrived at such a period of manhood as to be O'Connell's principal supporter in the Clare contest. Then again, we all knew that when The O'Gorman Mahon entered the House of Commons in my days, he was not entering that assembly for the first time. I think that when I knew him best Mr. Gladstone and he were the only members of the House who had been members of it immediately after the passing of the great Reform Bill in 1832. Mr. Gladstone, I should say, was always very friendly with dear old O'Gorman Mahon, and used to make pleasant allusions to the days when they first sat in Parliament together.

During the considerable interval that had passed between O'Gorman's early Parliamentary life and his subsequent return to the House he had enjoyed a career of many adventures. He had a taste both for soldiering and for sailing. He had served as a volunteer in

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various European armies, and had then transferred his services, as Cochrane did, to the cause of the Republic of Chili. The story was told of him that he was at one time Commander-in-Chief of the military forces in Chili and Lord High Admiral of its fleet. But O’Gorman himself always modestly disclaimed any such remarkable combination of dignities. He had been a great duellist in his time, and was, I think, when I knew him, the last representative of the duelling days then to be found in the House of Commons. I sat one evening at a dinner-party in his company, and there was some talk about his past adventurous career. One of the guests somewhat indiscreetly asked him how many times he had been challenged. ‘Sir,’ replied O’Gorman, drawing himself up with dignity, ‘I never was challenged. I hope I never in all my life gave any gentleman any reason to challenge me.’ Indeed, those who knew The O’Gorman Mahon, who observed the unvarying and high-bred courtesy of his manners, and who appreciated his chivalrous kindness of heart, must have found it easy to believe that he never willingly gave offence to mortal, and that the challenge must have come from him and not to him. I was driving with him one night from the House of Commons, and as we passed out of St. James’s Park and drove by the side of the Palace, he cast a glance at the building and said in a reflective tone: ‘It was there that I was first presented to the Prince Regent, afterwards George the Fourth.’ He seemed to enjoy the most unbroken and absolute health. I once said to him: ‘I suppose you never had an illness in all your life.’ ‘Yes, I had, indeed,’ he promptly replied; ‘when I was a boy at school I had a very bad attack of scarlatina.’ One night he was sitting in the smoking-room of the House of Com-

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mons with a cigar between his lips and a glass of whisky and soda beside him. A member of the House who was a medical man by profession happening to pass by, saw him thus engaged and said in a tone of gentle remonstrance: 'You ought not to drink that stuff, it's very bad for the liver.' 'My dear fellow,' O'Gorman replied, 'I never noticed that I had a liver.'

Those who know that gallant and uncompromising Orangeman Colonel Saunderson only through the reports of his speeches in the House of Commons and on political platforms, have probably very little idea as to what manner of man he is among his friends on both sides or on all sides of the Parliamentary field. I do not think there is a more popular man in the House of Commons than Colonel Saunderson. It would be difficult to imagine his having a serious personal enmity. It would be impossible to think of him as unfriendly or discourteous, or overbearing to any, even of those to whom he is most strongly opposed. Just after he has delivered one of his fiery speeches denouncing the Irish Nationalists as a body, and challenging them to raise the flag of rebellion in Ulster in order that he and his Orangemen may have the long-wished-for chance of driving across the frontier such of them as have not left their bodies within it, he may be seen sitting in the smoking-room with two or three of these same Irish Nationalists, exchanging jokes and humorous sayings and compliments and chaff. Everybody likes the impetuous, kindly-hearted, generous Orangeman, and I can only say for myself, that if I wanted a friendly office done I hardly know of anyone to whom I would more readily apply than to the gallant Colonel, who has so often expressed a desire to meet my comrades and myself on the battle-field. On one occasion, when he

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made a speech in the House of Commons in which he expressed his willingness, if needs were, to die in the last ditch of Ulster defending that province against the Nationalist rebels, I had a pleasant talk with him in which we arranged our plan of campaign. I was then leader of the Irish party, and I pointed out to him that if the battle were to come off it would be my duty to marshal my forces against him, and that I had the strongest possible objection to slaying him, or, a yet more likely contingency, to being slain by him. He saw the humour of the situation, and between us we hit upon a plan which might save the honour of both sides and yet not compromise the life of either leader. So we came to a genial understanding that each leader should stand by his flag to the last, and that when the latest in the Orange ranks and the latest in the Nationalist ranks had fallen in the ultimate ditch he and I should walk off arm in arm in quest of the nearest bottle of champagne and nearest box of cigars. Now, I would not have my readers to suppose that, because Colonel Saunderson is ready to indulge in a chaffing match of this pleasant kind, I fail to regard him as an earnest and a devoted supporter of the cause to which he is pledged. On the contrary, I feel well convinced that Colonel Saunderson's professions of devotion to the Orange flag are absolutely sincere, and that he would risk or sacrifice his life in his own political cause as readily as he would go into the smoking-room of the House of Commons to enjoy a cigar. He is a brilliant speaker, full of rattling humour and really pungent wit, and no man in the House is more certain of a hearing when he gets up to maintain his principles and to defy and to denounce his opponents. I have often met Colonel Saunderson in the houses of hospitable friends,

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and I have never met him without enjoying the meeting, and without wishing that so gallant a spirit could be won over to the service of the Irish National cause. Mine is only a wish, however, it could not be called a hope, for I am afraid it would be impossible to induce the gallant Colonel to exchange the Orange flag for the flag of green.

Another very popular man among all sections of the House of Commons is my friend T. P. O'Connor. T. P. is a splendid debater, and the most languid House is stirred to interest and animation the moment he gets up to make a speech. The very first speech he made in the House of Commons was listened to, as I know, with the warmest admiration by John Bright, who up to that time knew nothing whatever about him, and Bright expressed to me his strong desire that he should be made personally acquainted with T. P. 'I like the very sound of his voice,' he said. And of course I was only too glad of the chance of bringing the great tribune into personal association with the new member. T. P., as everybody knows, is a brilliant journalist as well as a powerful speaker and has all the capacity, if he could only allow himself the leisure, to make a distinct mark in literature. He is a well-read man, who started in life with an excellent classical education at the Galway College in Ireland, and he has studied deeply in French and German. He has been about the world a good deal, and knows the United States from the Narrows to the Golden Gate. His vein of rich Irish humour is inexhaustible, as is his kindliness of heart, and he is a most delightful companion. If all his time were not employed in starting newspapers, conducting newspapers, making speeches in the House of Commons and on public platforms, and in undertaking bicycle tours,

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I think he could write a novel descriptive of Irish life which would be remembered with the best books of the kind which we have, from Banim, and Carleton, and Gerald Griffin. Like each of these writers, he has a deep suffusing sense of all that is pathetic as well as of all that is humourous in Irish life, and indeed in life generally, and I hope that the novel may yet come, and I am sure that when it does come the world will read it.

The House of Commons still remembers poor Joe Biggar — Biggar of the rough tongue, the uncouth manner, and the kindly heart. Biggar was detested in the House during his early years of obstruction there, but he became a favourite afterwards among men of all parties who could appreciate his rugged independence, his absolute unselfishness, his entire devotion to his cause, and his readiness to do a good turn whenever any chance came in his way. One characteristic anecdote of Biggar I must mention. On the eve of a general election I met him in one of the division lobbies of the House. We of the Nationalist party were then on the look-out for some suitable candidates to contest certain difficult seats in Ireland. Biggar mentioned to me the name of a man who was anxious to be accepted as one of these candidates. Biggar communicated this wish to me, but added no opinion of his own. I knew the man whom he named, but I did not think him by any means a likely person to make any impression on the constituency. I merely said: 'I think, Biggar, we had better postpone his candidature for the present.' Biggar reflected for a moment, and then there came from him the words: 'Well, that is what Tim Healy says, but Tim puts it in his own way.' 'How does Tim put it?' I naturally asked. 'Tim says,' replied Biggar, 'tell him to go to Hell.' Really the advice in both ways came

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to much the same thing, for to postpone the ambitious man's candidature until after the general election was very much like the consigning of him to the political Acheron.

'Tim' Healy is one of the cleverest men I have ever met, and I have met a good many clever men in the course of my active life. I use the word clever in the strict sense of the word's application. 'Clever' is defined by a standard dictionary as lively, agile, dexterous, quick to seize. In this sense Mr. Healy's mind is undoubtedly clever. It is lively, it is all alive; it is agile with the most surprising agility. It is dexterous as the skill of a juggler could be; it is quick to seize on any opportunity given by an opponent for his own confusion. Healy does not profess to be in the higher sense an intellectual man, but he has an intelligence which shows a sprite-like capacity for instantaneous appearance in unexpected places. When Healy rises to speak in the House of Commons he fixes the attention of the whole House at once, for nobody can tell what he is likely to say or what he may not say, and he has an amazing gift of phrase and of epithet. 'Healy is the imp of your party,' an English member once said to me; 'he always seems to take a delight in clawing his opponent. Healy gets at the heart of the most difficult and most complex question as if by a kind of supernatural instinct. He has the faculty of carefully studying out a subject, and he must have employed long study to enable him to become, as he has become, a perfect master of some of the most complicated and perplexed schemes of legislation that ever bewildered even the lawyers of the House. But I do not myself often think of Tim Healy as of a man carefully sitting down in a study and methodically thinking some subject out. It

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always seemed to me as if he muttered to himself some spell or conjuration, and then, behold the whole misty obscurity of the subject became as light to him. He is better read in literature than most men would be apt to think him who only heard him speak in the House of Commons, but his readiness in debate is a gift which no school training would ever have enabled him to acquire.

It is no exaggeration to say that the House of Commons does not at present hold a readier debater. He is not an orator in any sense of the word, and I do not believe he would care in the least to be an orator if the powers above were to offer to endow him with the higher order of eloquence. He reminds me of one of the Greek wrestlers who delighted to grapple with an opponent and use every manner of hitting, kicking, squeezing and choking to get his opponent helplessly on the ground. He is never out of order unless he has some reason for wishing to be out of order; if he has no such reason and wishes to keep within bounds, the readiest Speaker is not ready enough to catch him tripping. Whatever he wants to say he will contrive to say, while all the time managing so as to keep out of the Speaker's range. His appearance suggests physical feebleness more than anything else, and yet I have never known a succession of all-night sittings which could cause him, as the colloquial phrase goes, to turn a hair. His voice is tuneless, unmelodious, and even raucous, but one is compelled to listen to him for the sake of his dexterous arguments, his vocabulary of audacious phrases, his inexhaustible fertility of whimsical illustration, and his readiness in the invention of ironical epithets. The English member's allusion to the qualities of an imp was not without its appropriateness of application. There does seem to be an element of

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diablerie in Mr. Healy's cleverness. He appears to me to look upon the struggles of humanity, especially of humanity as illustrated by the House of Commons, with all the captivating malignity of the demon in Le Sage's immortal story. There is much that is thoroughly Irish in Healy's humour and in his humours, but the precision and the definiteness with which his intellect penetrates through all the complications of some involved and intricate subject, and arranges the whole into orderly mechanism, show qualities which can hardly be regarded as characteristically Hibernian. In private life it must be said that Healy is unquestionably a good friend to his friend. So far as public life is concerned he appears to delight in quarrels and to revel in enmities, but all the same it is certain that if he likes a man he does like him, and will stand by him to the last. I cannot believe that he ever knew what it was to be afraid of anything. The very first speech he ever made in the House of Commons showed him as completely a master of himself and of the subject, as free from nervousness and stage fright, as willing to wound, and as little afraid to strike, as if he had spent the greater part of a lifetime in Parliamentary debate. He is a *gamin* of genius, a sprite with a gift for the details of legislation, a destructive force which can transform itself at will into a spirit of construction and re-construction. He is usually a terror to his opponents, and sometimes too, I believe, a terror to his friends. One thing certain is, no one ever said or is ever likely to say that 'Tim' Healy is not a clever man.

Mr. William O'Brien is not now a member of the House of Commons, but he was in the House for many years, and can be there again whenever he feels so inclined, and therefore I may class him, as I have already

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classed Mr. Sexton, among Irish members. William O'Brien has a nature instinct with enthusiasm, generosity, and patriotic passion. A more single-minded and unselfish man it would be impossible to find. I wish I could relate some anecdotes which I know to be true, and which would show his utter disregard for all considerations of personal gain or advancement at a time when his whole life was but a hard struggle for the means of living. His eloquence is the eloquence of deep feeling, of sensitiveness, and of a half-poetic imagination. I have sometimes been so far carried away by my literary training and tendencies as to wish that William O'Brien would give up more of his time to the writing of historical novels, and would continue to make the Ireland of Elizabeth's days live again for us, as he has done already in his romance 'A Queen of Men.' But I feel well convinced that if there were a meeting called in any part of Ireland, with the object of doing anything that could lend a helping hand to the distressed among the Irish tenantry, William O'Brien would leave his most important chapter half finished for an indefinite time, and travel night and day to put himself and his eloquence at the service of his countrymen. I read of him the other day as having been ordered to take a short rest from political work and speech-making of every kind, and I read of him as taking his holiday close by the site of what once were the ruins of Carthage. It seemed to me, somehow, a suitable place for so dreamy, poetic, impassioned, and fervid a spirit to seek a short respite and relief from the tumult of political organisation and the exhausting cares of an Irish leader's life.

Michael Davitt is an Irish member who has in his nature much of the national fervour and much of the

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national sympathy with all that is poetic and mystic and melancholy. Yet Davitt, too, like William O'Brien, is one of the most practical men living where any work has to be done in or out of Parliament for the cause of any section of his countrymen. Davitt has been a distinct success in the House of Commons. I heard Mr. Gladstone give to one of his speeches a tribute of praise as generous as it was evidently sincere. Davitt is much liked in the House personally, because of his sweet and courteous manners and the unpretentious disinterestedness with which he has devoted himself to his cause. There is nothing about him of the bearing of what one might call the melo-dramatic patriot. He is always bright and genial, enjoys a good joke, loves a good story, and can make himself at home and on friendly terms with any good fellow of whatever political party. Davitt is decidedly social in his tendencies, and does not cherish in his mind the slightest feeling of hatred to the Saxon as a man, even though that tyrant Saxon did hold him in prison for many years. I remember well a certain occasion, nearly twelve years ago, when it fell to the lot of Davitt and myself to hold a joint reception in the city of Montreal in Canada. It came about in this way. I was going through the United States and Canada on a Home Rule mission; Davitt was travelling in the same regions as the advocate, I think, of the cause of the Irish tenantry. We both happened to be in Montreal at the same time, and for the convenience of our fellow-countrymen and of our Canadian sympathisers who wished to exchange a word with us, it was thought desirable that we should hold a joint reception. So we did, in the great room of one of the great hotels. We spent hours of cordial greeting, hand-shaking, and the interchanging of sympathies and

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hopes. I shall never forget how well Davitt bore himself during that long and exhausting time. He had fresh words for everyone, his eye lighted with pleasure as each new sympathiser came up to press his hand; he never seemed to me performing a mere duty, he never uttered a commonplace, never used an expression of routine or ceremonial welcome, spoke as if his heart was in it all, as indeed no doubt it was; and when the whole was over appeared just as brisk and unwearied as though he had been only having a passing talk with half a dozen old acquaintances.

Let me give a short account of another social gathering of a very different order, at which later on I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Davitt. This latter gathering was but a small one, and it took place at the house of a lady in London. This lady was a strong Conservative by political principles and family traditions, but she had a natural admiration for men of merit and distinction, whatever might be their opinions, and she was impressed by the character and the career of Michael Davitt. She had prevailed upon Davitt to accept an invitation to luncheon at her house, and she had invited some young Conservative members of either House of Parliament to meet him. I think that except for Davitt himself I was the only Irish Nationalist present. I felt all the time uncertain which more to admire, the perfect ease of Davitt's manner in this company, which might at first have seemed uncongenial, or the courteous anxiety on the part of the Tory aristocrats not to let it be supposed that they regarded Davitt as a lion, or a curiosity of any kind, but simply as a friend of their hostess, a man whom they were delighted to meet. I did not ask Davitt whether he had enjoyed himself that day, but I am sure he did, and I am sure that I did,

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and I think the whole company thought better of each other after that pleasant social meeting.

I must devote a few lines of tribute to the memory of my old friend, a very dear friend, the late Richard Power. 'Dick' Power, as he was commonly called in the House of Commons, was looked upon as a personal friend by the great majority of the members. He was a typical Irish country gentleman of what might almost be called the ideal kind. He was handsome, clever, dashing, a bold and brilliant rider, a keen sportsman, a first-rate shot, an admirable teller of stories, ever ready with his jest and his repartee, a polished man of society who knew London as well as he knew his native county. Dick Power was for many years Whip of the Irish National party, and had for his colleague in that office Mr. Edward Sheil, nephew of that Richard Lalor Sheil, the friend and political comrade of Daniel O'Connell, who ranked high among the Parliamentary orators of his day, was described by Mr. Gladstone as a really great orator, and eulogised by Mr. Disraeli to the disparagement of Canning. Power and Sheil were just the men to be successful Parliamentary Whips, for each had the training and the manners that are needed for a man who has to deal with and conciliate the humours of other men, and each had a thorough understanding of the rules, usages, and traditions of Parliamentary life. Sheil's father had been a distinguished diplomatist, and had been British Minister in Persia, where, indeed, Sheil the younger was born. Dick Power was a capital hand at a rattling speech, and could keep the House in the liveliest good humour by his happy hits and his genial jests. It used to be one of the annual treats of the House when the motion was made for the adjournment over the Derby Day, and Sir Wilfrid Lawson rose

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to deliver a series of capital jokes in opposition to the motion, and Dick Power got up to deliver another series of jokes in its support. Except on some such festive occasions as these Dick Power seldom spoke, taking the Whip's natural view that his office was rather to regulate the speeches of other men, to suggest eloquence to this member, silence to that, and above all to see to the numbers in the division lobbies. Sheil could make an excellent speech if some occasion actually called upon him to speak, but he did not often admit that such an occasion had arisen, and I do not think I heard him speak more than twice in the House during all the years when I sat as his Parliamentary colleague. There is a story told of Edward Sheil which is worth repeating. He came into the House of Commons for the first time at the general election of 1874; he was then only just of age, and looked extremely young even for his years. On the day when the House opened and members were to be sworn in, Sheil presented himself at the members' entrance in Palace Yard. The policeman on duty stopped him at the gate, and asked him what he wanted there. He said he wanted to go into the House of Commons. The policeman inquired what business he had in the House of Commons. Sheil said he was a member of the House, and desired to be sworn in. 'Garn,' said the policeman, or words to that effect. Sheil repeated his statement with increasing firmness. The policeman relaxed a little. 'Perhaps you mean that your father is a member,' he said. 'No, I don't,' Sheil reiterated; 'I am a member myself.' 'Now you just go along out of this,' said the policeman sternly; 'I have no time to waste here chaffing with you.' Just at this moment there came happily on the scene a little group of members, most of whom were known to the

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police, and some of whom were acquainted with Sheil, and were able to testify to the fact that, despite his absurdly youthful appearance, he was a duly elected member of Parliament. So the incident terminated with equal honour to both parties.

Richard Power has been dead these some years. His bright career came to an untimely end. Edward Sheil I have met lately several times. He declined to stand again for a constituency when the general election of 1892 came on, and he now lives a sort of recluse life in a small sea-side town not far from the spot where I have lately taken up my abode. We talk together philosophically like men who have been in the thick of the political world, and have outlived our vain ambitions, and are content to let the idle-busy, striving-do-nothing crowd go its way.

Sheil, to be sure, is younger than I by twenty years and more, but to both of us I feel, somehow, as if the beautiful words of the gifted American writer, Henry Harland, would apply — ‘I suppose it must be that we pass the Castle of Enchantment while we are asleep. For surely, at first, it is before us — we are moving towards it; we can see it shining in the distance; we shall reach it to-morrow, next week, next year. And then — and then, one morning we wake up, and lo! it is behind us. We have passed it. We are sailing away from it. We can’t turn back — we can only look back.’

CHAPTER XLI

CARDINAL MANNING

MORE than a quarter of a century has passed away since I heard Cardinal Manning address a great meeting in St. James's Hall, Piccadilly. I had heard Cardinal Manning preach before that time, and had had the honour of meeting him at his private residence, as it then was, in York Place, Baker Street. But this meeting in St. James's Hall was the first occasion on which I heard him address a great public assemblage, and was able to realise the extraordinary control which he could exercise over a vast crowd. The meeting was held in order to make a demonstration in favour of a reform in the conditions which then affected the education of Catholics in these countries. On the platform were the great Catholic peers, some of them boasting a lineage stretching back to years when Catholicism was yet unconscious of any possible religious rivalry in England. At such meetings one might see the Norfolks, the Denbighs, the Dormers, the Petres, and such later accessions to Catholicism as the Marquess of Bute, whose change created such a sensation and gave a living picture to one of Disraeli's more recent novels; and, at a date a little nearer to our own time, the Marquess of Ripon, whose appointment as Governor-General of India aroused anti-Catholic protests in England even among writers who ought to have had broader minds

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and more liberal views, and whose Viceroyalty and whose whole subsequent public career justified the brightest hopes that his best friends could have formed of him. There too might be seen Lord Acton, the head of a distinguished and ancient family long famous in the diplomatic service, who before he was called to the peerage had, as Sir John Acton, won honourable distinction in the House of Commons and high literary reputation as a writer and a scholar. Some Irish members were on the platform too, men of station and wealth like Monsell, afterwards Lord Emly; men of energy and brains like John Francis Maguire; perhaps too the handsome brilliant ruined O'Donoghue, with his legendary pedigree and his broken fortunes. At the one meeting to which I particularly refer a speaker is presently introduced who has only to make his appearance in front of the platform in order to awaken one universal burst of applause. The Duke of Norfolk on the platform and poor Irish Paddy in the crowd vie with each other in demonstrations of welcome. The steady English shopkeeper from Islington is as ardent in his plaudits as any O'Donoghue or Maguire. The meeting is inspired by one spirit and soul.

The man who has aroused all this emotion shrinks back almost as if he were afraid of it, although it surely is not new to him. He is a tall thin personage, some sixty-two years of age. His face is bloodless, pale as a ghost, one might say. He is so thin as to look almost cadaverous. The outlines of the face are handsome and dignified. There is much of courtly grace and refinement about the bearing and gestures of this pale, weak, and wasted man. He wears a long robe of violet silk, with some kind of dark cape or collar, and has a massive gold chain round his neck, holding attached to it a

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great gold cross. There is a certain nervous quivering about his eyes and lips, but otherwise he is perfectly collected and master of the occasion. His voice is thin, but wonderfully clear and penetrating. It is heard all through this great hall—a moment ago so noisy, now so silent. The words fall with a slow, quiet force, like drops of water. Whatever your opinion may be, you cannot choose but listen; and, indeed, you want only to listen and to see. For this is the foremost man in the Catholic Church of England. This is the Cardinal Grandison of Disraeli's 'Lothair,' Dr. Henry Edward Manning, Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, successor in that office to Cardinal Wiseman.

It is no wonder that the Irishmen at the meeting were enthusiastic about Archbishop Manning—Cardinal Manning to speak of him by the title so long familiar to our ears. An Englishman of Englishmen, with no drop of Irish blood in his veins, he became more Hibernian than the Hibernians themselves in his sympathies with Ireland. A man of social position, of old family, of the highest education and the most refined instincts, he would leave the Catholic noblemen at any time to go down to his Irish teetotalers at the East End of London. Cardinal Manning firmly believed that the true and the ideal greatness of England is yet to be accomplished through the pure influence of that religious devotion which is at the bottom of the Celtic nature. He loved his own country deeply, but turned away from the contemplation of her modern condition of industrial prosperity, city wealth, and ever broadening Imperial aggrandisement, to the days 'when yet,' to use his own language, 'saints trod the soil of England.' 'In England there has been no saint since the Reformation,' he said to me one day at his own house,

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in his sweet sad tones. Even the most worldly-minded person, whatever might be his former belief, religious or political, could not but be deeply impressed by the sweetness, the thoughtfulness, the dignity, I might well say the sanctity of the man, who thus poured forth with a manner full of the most tranquil conviction the doctrine which seemed to proclaim all practical modern progress a failure, and to glorify the faith of the true believer, prince, priest, or peasant, as the sole herald and repository of light and liberty and regeneration to a sinking and degraded world.

We are all acquainted with the story of Manning's career, of the long and slow change which brought him over from the Church of England to the Church of Rome. It was while he was still uncertain where to turn that the celebrated 'Papal Aggression' took place. Cardinal Wiseman was sent to England by the Pope, with the title of Archbishop of Westminster. All England raged. Lord John Russell wrote his famous 'Durham Letter.' The Lord Chancellor Campbell, at a public dinner in the City of London, called up a storm of enthusiasm by quoting the line from Shakespeare, which declares that

Under our feet we'll stamp thy Cardinal's hat.

Protestant zealots in Stockport belaboured the Roman Catholics and sacked their houses; Irish labourers in Birkenhead retorted upon the Protestants. The Government brought in the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill — a measure making it penal for any Catholic prelate to call himself Archbishop or Bishop of any place in England. Let him be Archbishop Wiseman or Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop of Mesopotamia, as long as he liked, but not Archbishop of Westminster or Southwark. The

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Bill was powerfully, splendidly opposed by Gladstone, Bright, and Cobden, on the ground that it invaded the precincts of religious liberty; but it was carried and made law. There it remained. There never was the slightest attempt made to enforce it. The Catholic prelates held to the titles the Pope had given them; and no English court, judge, magistrate, or policeman ever offered to prevent or punish them. No other proceeding so ludicrous, so barren as the carrying of that measure has been known in the England of our time.

Cardinal Wiseman I remember well. I saw and heard him often, and I had a slight personal acquaintance with him. I first heard him preach in one of the London Catholic churches before I had become a resident in the metropolis, and afterwards he paid a visit to Liverpool, where I was then a journalist, and he attended some of the meetings of the Liverpool Catholic Institute, and looked with evident pleasure at the performance from 'Fabiola' by the boys of the school, with many of whom he talked afterwards in a bright, genial, fatherly sort of way which put the boys at their ease and won them into frank confidence. On another occasion Cardinal Wiseman came to Liverpool to deliver a lecture at the Philharmonic Hall, and I well remember that the strength of the anti-papal feeling at the time manifested itself by the gathering of a crowd of roughs, who flung stones at the Cardinal's carriage as he drove up Mount Pleasant on his way to the Hall. I had several opportunities afterwards of observing Cardinal Wiseman. He impressed me as especially a discreet man. He was calm, plausible, powerful. He was very earnest in the cause of the Catholic Church, but he seemed much more like a man of the world than Newman. There was little of the loftily spiritual in his manner or his appearance.

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His bulky person and swollen face suggested at the first glance a sort of Abbot Boniface; he was I believe in reality an ascetic. The corpulence which seemed the result of good living was only the effect of ill health. He had an imposing and persuasive manner. His ability was singularly flexible. His eloquence was sometimes too gorgeous and ornamental for pure taste, but when the occasion needed he could address an audience in language of the simplest and most practical common sense. The same adaptability, if I may use such a word, was evident in all he did. He would talk with a Cabinet Minister on terms of calm equality, as if his rank must be self-evident, and he delighted to set a band of poor school children playing around him. He was a cosmopolitan — English and Irish by extraction, Spanish by birth, Roman by education. When he spoke English he was exactly like what a portly, dignified British bishop ought to be — a John Bull in every respect. When he spoke Italian at Rome he fell, instinctively and at once, into all the peculiarities of intonation and gesture which distinguish the people of Italy from all other nations. When he conversed in Spanish he subsided into the grave, somewhat saturnine dignity and repose of the true Castilian. All this, I presume, was but the natural effect of that flexibility of temperament which I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied he was a profoundly earnest and single-minded man; the testimony of many whom I know and who knew him would compel anyone to that conviction. But such was not the impression he might have left on a mere acquaintance. He seemed rather one who could, for a purpose which he believed great, be all things to all men. He reminded one of some great, capable, worldly-wise, astute Prince of the Church of other gen-

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erations, politician rather than priest, more ready to sustain and skilled to defend the temporal power of the Papacy than to illustrate its highest spiritual influence.

Cardinal Newman I saw for the first time in Liverpool. I heard him deliver there, just before the Crimean war, his celebrated lectures on the settlement of the Turks in Europe. It was in one of those lectures that he declared the Turk to have no more right to any part of the soil of Europe than the pirate had to the sea which he ravaged. His words had little effect at the time on the public mind of England, agitated as it was by a panic about the designs of Russia and by the impulse which the proposals of the Emperor Napoleon for an alliance with France had given to those who were anxious for war. All the years which have passed, however, since the Crimean campaign have only served to justify the views and to verify the prediction of Newman. With Cardinal Newman himself I had no further acquaintance than that which was allowed to me by the honour of a formal presentation and a few friendly words in London, not many years before his death.

With his brother Francis Newman I was associated a good deal in various political organisations. Francis Newman was a strong reformer in the modern sense. He was on the side of every measure which tended towards equality of civil and religious rights amongst men. He came out from his habitual seclusion during the American Civil War. He was, however, but a poor public speaker. At his very best he was the professor talking to his class, not the orator addressing a crowd. His manner was singularly strained and ineffective. With all his intellect, his high culture, and his indomitable courage, Francis Newman was never an influential man in English politics. It may be that his keen logic

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was too uncompromising, and there can be no practical statesmanship without compromise. It may be that there was something eccentric, egotistic in the less offensive sense, and crotchety in that sharp, independent, and self-sufficing intelligence. Whatever the reason, nine out of every ten men in England used to set him down as hopelessly given over to crotchets, while the tenth man, admiring, however much, his intellect and capacity, was often grieved and sometimes provoked that both together did not make Newman a greater power in the nation. Even his purely literary and scholastic productions were marked now and then by the same fatal characteristic. All the outfit, all the materials were there in surprising profusion. The intellect, the culture, the patience, the sincerity were there. But the result was not in proportion to the value of the materials. Something always intervened, or something always was wanting. Francis Newman, so far as my judgment goes, never accomplished anything equal to that strength and capacity which those who knew him felt sure that he possessed.

With Cardinal Manning I was in frequent association during many years. I hope I may say that he counted me among his friends. My personal acquaintance with him began through a letter of introduction which I received from my old friend John Francis Maguire, then a prominent Catholic and Nationalist member of the House of Commons. The letter brought me a cordial invitation to visit him. At that time Cardinal Manning was living, as I have said, in York Place, and I had some opportunities of seeing him there. He was always, while I knew him, a total abstainer so far as the personal use of wines and spirits was concerned, but at the time I speak of he was not quite so austere in the

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maintenance of his principles as he became at a later day. I remember that the first day that I dined at his house he told me that I might have wine if I wished for it, but that he and his secretary — we three formed the whole company — never tasted wine. I need hardly say that on that occasion I did not make any demand for the liquor which, though discouraged, was not actually forbidden. At a later period Cardinal Manning took up his residence in Archbishop's House, Westminster, a place which is in my mind always associated with his memory. There I visited him very often. It would be impossible to find a more courteous host or a more delightful talker. He could talk of anything. With that worn, emaciated, ascetic face, that frame so slender and delicate that it seemed only barely able to sustain its owner in actual life, there was associated a strength of mind, a keen, living interest in all subjects which had to do with the welfare of humanity, that compelled him to keep in constant touch with all that was going on in the world around him. Except for his frequent journeys to Rome he lived almost always in London. Although a great deal of an ascetic, as his emaciated face and figure would testify, he was nothing of a hermit. He mingled to a certain extent in society, he took part in many public movements, and he doubtless gave Mr. Disraeli many opportunities of studying his manner and bearing, the result of which study was found in the portrait of Cardinal Grandison. He was a man of the widest culture, of high intellectual gifts, of keen and penetrating judgment in all ordinary affairs, remarkable for his close and logical argument, his persuasive reasoning, and a genial, quiet kind of humour which seemed especially calculated to dissolve sophistry by its action. In fact, he was an English gentleman and a

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man of the world; he was educated at Oxford with Arthur Pendennis and young Magnus Charters. He was, as I have said in another chapter, a frequent visitor to the House of Commons, and talked politics in the lobby with Gladstone and Sir George Trevelyan. He met Disraeli at dinner-parties and was on friendly terms, I have no doubt, with Huxley and Herbert Spencer. He read all the newspapers, and thoroughly appreciated the humours of 'Punch,' and was not above a little pleasant gossip about the men and women who moved in society. He had a strong feeling against all theatrical performances, and a great objection to women taking part in charitable bazaars and fancy fairs, even for the most beneficent purposes, where young ladies were induced to vie with each other in the alluring of customers to buy the articles spread out for sale.

Everybody seemed to seek for Cardinal Manning's advice on all manner of subjects. Representatives of every kind of organisation for the benefit of any class of men or women, or of any social and political reform, crowded in upon him at Archbishop's House all day long. The working classes of London adored him, not merely for the part he took in the great dock strike, but for the sympathy and the advice which were always ready for them at any moment when they needed help or counsel. The temperance society which he founded, and called 'The League of the Cross,' brought him into close association with the Irishmen in the East End of London, and indeed of all parts of the metropolis and of the country. In hard and dry politics his tendencies, I think, were rather Conservative than otherwise, and he seldom identified himself with movements for mere political reform, where no question of social regeneration was concerned. But where any social improvement

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was to be gained, where the burdens on the poor were to be lightened and the restrictions on the lowly were to be relaxed, where the education of boys and girls was to be made easy, and where temperance was to be encouraged among all orders and ages — on such questions as these he was ready to work with anyone, and he knew absolutely no distinction of religious denomination or political party. I do not think any man of his time, even Mr. Gladstone himself, ever received a more enthusiastic welcome from a great meeting mainly composed of English working men, the vast majority of whom certainly had little sympathy with the Cardinal's religious principles or with his position as a Prince of the Roman Church.

There was one great political movement going on which brought me into constant intercourse with Cardinal Manning. Perhaps I need hardly say I speak of the movement for Home Rule in Ireland. Now, I am quite sure that Cardinal Manning concerned himself but little about the doctrine of nationalities. He never, so far as I know, encouraged in the slightest way the idea that two peoples like the English and the Irish might not live together in peace, happiness, and prosperity under one common imperial system. To say that he was a separatist would be as absurd as to say that he was an anarchist. But he saw that the Irish people, and especially of course the Irish Catholics, were placed at a great disadvantage when their interests, and above all their educational interests, were left at the mercy of a Parliamentary majority composed of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen sitting in Westminster to make laws for the two islands. He did not see that there was any likelihood of full justice being done to Ireland under such a system, no matter how well inten-

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tioned the majority might be. Furthermore he had studied the condition of the English Colonies, and he saw what the system of Home Rule had done for Canada and for Australasia. Therefore he became a Home Ruler for Ireland.

I have often heard it said that he became a Home Ruler because, in the first instance, of his religious sympathies with the Catholics of Ireland. The conjecture seems to me perfectly reasonable. He certainly did not become a Home Ruler because of any mere desire to disturb, even for the sake of some theoretical improvement, the political condition of Great Britain and Ireland. But it is beyond question that he did become a Home Ruler according to the sense in which we all employ the word, and that during the later years of his life he publicly identified himself with the cause of Irish Home Rule. I am anxious to express myself emphatically on that point, because I read but lately that notwithstanding all his sympathies with the Irish Catholics he held himself aloof from the political agitation for Home Rule. What I have to say on that subject is that he was in constant consultation with the representatives of the Home Rule movement; that he received us frequently in Archbishop's House, and received us avowedly as the Parliamentary representatives of that cause. We asked for and obtained his advice as to our policy with regard to this, that, and the other detail of Mr. Gladstone's first measure of Home Rule, and he received in Archbishop's House an address of congratulation on one of his birthdays, which was presented by Parnell and supported by a crowd of the Irish Nationalist members. I have been at his house again and again with a group of Irish Nationalist members who went there to ask his advice on some question

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belonging to our movement and our cause, and he sat with us, talked with us, listened to our statements and made his suggestions as only one who thoroughly identified himself with our movement could possibly do. A wonderfully shrewd counsellor he always was. He seemed thoroughly to understand the tendencies and the influences of parties and movements within the House of Commons, could estimate the value of this or that suggested alliance or association, and appeared well able to judge of the sincerity, the influence, and the strength of public men. Down to the very close of his days he was consulted by me and by many other Irish Nationalist members of Parliament on subjects the most intimately connected with our organisation, its objects, and its chances of success. All this went on at a time when, as everybody knows, most of the great English Catholic nobles were decidedly opposed to our Home Rule movement, and when the English Catholic nobles, like the Marquis of Ripon and Lord Acton, who sympathised with us and supported us, were few indeed. There was something cheering in the very sound of his voice. Even when the times seemed darkest it was apparently part of his temperament to look for and to see the light ahead. It seems almost needless to say that his was always a moderating influence, that he discouraged all vehemence of utterance, that he set himself against pessimistic tendencies, and did his best to make the agitation for Home Rule as becoming in its manner and its methods as it was rightful in its claims.

I have often wondered how Cardinal Manning found time to attend to all the work which he voluntarily imposed upon himself, yet he never seemed to have the slightest inclination to shelter himself from increasing claims by the reasonable plea of increasing work. I

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could not find that he was ever for a moment unoccupied, and yet he always seemed able to make time for any purpose which appealed to his sympathy or his kind feeling. I was at one time much interested in the career of a rising young painter, who seemed to me to have great promise in his art, and who has since fulfilled that promise. This painter was very anxious to make a sketch of Cardinal Manning. Although not a Catholic, he was a great admirer of the Cardinal, and he thought moreover that his delicate wasted face, with its blended expression of sweetness, humour, and sanctity, would give him a great chance for the display of his own peculiarly delicate skill. Not without some hesitation I ventured to ask the Cardinal to give my friend two or three sittings. The Cardinal most readily and graciously consented, and gave my friend ample opportunity of carrying out his purpose. A young Protestant lady whom I knew asked me once if I could induce Cardinal Manning to write his name in a book of his which she had in her possession, and greatly prized. I undertook the task, and the Cardinal not only wrote his name on one of the blank pages of the volume, but wrote out a long quotation from the volume itself. These may seem but trivial instances of kindness, yet they are worth noting in the case of an overworked man with a singularly delicate frame; and there are instances which I could easily multiply from my own experience, and which I am sure could be easily multiplied from the experience of anyone who knew Cardinal Manning.

Unlike some other great men whom I have known, Cardinal Manning had a wonderful eye and memory for faces. He seemed never to forget anyone who had been even in the most rapid way presented to him. We all

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know how we poor mediocrities are frequently disappointed and vexed because some eminent person whom we have already met several times appears to have forgotten all about us when we come in his way again, and either makes a totally wrong guess at our identity, or has to get it fully explained and brought home to him. This is the common experience of us all, and, indeed, some of us are often inclined to modify our estimates of the great man himself, because of the manner in which our own individuality appears to have slipped from his memory. There was no fear of any wound to the pride of mediocrity when mediocrity having been once presented to Cardinal Manning, came to meet the Cardinal for a second time. There was instant recognition, there was a complete recollection of the name and the individuality and the merits of poor expectant mediocrity. Somebody once said to me in a mood of disparaging criticism that he thought Cardinal Manning must have cultivated this art of remembering faces and names as one of the duties of his position, and in order to make for himself friends everywhere in a community the great majority of whose members were at first disposed to be unfriendly to his position, and his claims, and himself. I could only say then, and can only say now, that I believed in the first instance Cardinal Manning had an extraordinary gift of remembering faces and names, and that in the second instance if he did cultivate such a faculty it was a most wise and gracious thing of him to do, and that we all owed him a deep debt of gratitude for such an endeavour. I have heard many a poor Irish working man from the East End — some Irish teetotaler who had been a member of Cardinal Manning's League of the Cross — tell how the Cardinal had recognised him after long absence, and

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remembered his name, and made kindly inquiry about his wife and his children. Now the Cardinal certainly had not much to gain, for any ambitious purposes nourished by the Church of Rome, by any effort at conciliating the good will of poor teetotal Paddy from the East End of London. Only he had a marvellous faculty for identifying faces and remembering names, and his own kindness of heart did all the rest. Most of us, let it be maintained, could find it in our hearts to manifest a kindly interest in this or that obscure person whom we had met somewhere before if only we could manage to recollect who the obscure person was and what was his name and how and all about him.

I have often heard and read that Cardinal Manning was apt to be very acrid in his tone when analysing some of the peculiarities of eminent men, even of eminent men who were his personal friends. I cannot say that I myself ever observed any peculiarity of this kind, although it often happened to me to talk with Cardinal Manning about the ways of this or that public man, and this or that private friend. I think, however, I can understand how such an idea may have got abroad, and may have been maintained in all sincerity by many persons. I had always noticed, as I have already observed in this chapter, that there was in Cardinal Manning's mental constitution a vein of keen, genial, and yet somewhat satirical humour which often expressed itself spontaneously, even unwillingly, in a few delicate but droll touches. I think Cardinal Manning could not always resist the temptation to throw in some brief descriptive remark which showed in the lightest and most passing way that he thoroughly understood some one or two of a great man's little weaknesses. So far as my experience goes, I never

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saw any tendency in Cardinal Manning to judge harshly of those whom he knew, to emphasise ill-naturedly any personal defects, or to point too markedly at trivial foibles. But I should certainly say that Cardinal Manning was about the last man on whom it would be quite safe for a pretentious and inflated personage to try and pass off his own greatness at his own estimate. One of the charms of Cardinal Manning's very charming conversation was to be found in the fact that he had this quick and keen perception of character, and that a slight touch of the satirical occasionally gave freshness and life to his remarks. I should think Pascal could hardly have kept himself from uttering now and then some little phrase of delicate satirical meaning when speaking of this or that high-placed personage with whom he had been brought into association. But I never observed any tendency in Cardinal Manning to undue disparagement of any order of greatness, to uncharitable construction of the motives and purposes of men and women whom he met, to anything approaching the ignoble desire to make out that what the world calls great is not so really great after all, to any feeling, indeed, that was not at the heart of it genial, gracious, and charitable. It would be superfluous to remark that I do not expect all the readers of these pages to have any sympathy with the opinions, theological or political, of such a man as Cardinal Manning. But the man himself was worthy of profound interest, of study, and of admiration from everyone, whatever his personal opinions, who could appreciate a noble life. He was the spirit, the soul, the ideal of mediæval faith embodied in the form of a living English scholar and gentleman. I cannot better conclude this chapter than by adopting the closing

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words of the admirable monograph on Cardinal Manning by Francis de Pressensé: 'Before this great figure, the embodiment of austerity and love, of asceticism and charity, before the memory of this man who loved power, but only that he might consecrate it to the noblest uses, these words rise involuntarily to the lips — *Ecce sacerdos magnus.*'

CHAPTER XLII

WILLIAM BLACK — RUDYARD KIPLING

SINCE I began to write this second volume I received the sad news of the death of my dear old friend William Black, who died at a time when his literary career seemed yet only spreading out before him. I have mentioned Black more than once already in this book: I have spoken of my early association with him when we were both attached to the literary staff of the 'Morning Star,' and when we both were beginning our literary work. Of the group of men then young who wrote for the 'Morning Star,' Washington Wilks, Leicester Buckingham, Edmund Yates, George Eric Mackay and others as well as William Black are dead. During all the years that intervened between those distant days and his death my friendship with William Black was never interrupted, for even when now and then an ocean divided us, we kept in touch with each other by correspondence and by the interchange of ideas. After my return from the United States to settle again in London, I became once more a colleague of William Black, for he and I were both members of the literary staff of the 'Daily News.' Our ways, to a certain extent, soon divided. Black made a great literary success by his novel 'A Daughter of Heth,' and he withdrew altogether from newspaper work. I became drawn into the ways of political life, and gave

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up many years to close attendance in the House of Commons. We were constantly meeting, however, and were familiar visitors at each other's houses. Black was one of those who constituted that pleasant literary brotherhood which I have described in an earlier part of this work as the Bohemia of Fitzroy Square. After a while he ceased to be a resident of London, and took up his abode in Paston House, Brighton, which he occupied until his death. In the meantime, however, he kept up a *pied à terre* in London, a little set of chambers in a street off the Strand, to which he could run up from Brighton every now and then to talk with his old friends or to see anything new that was going on in the theatrical world, or to dine with a friend like myself at the House of Commons. He was always inviting some of us to his hospitable home in Brighton, and there I spent many delightful days from time to time, and always met a pleasant company of literary and artistic men and women. Black was the very soul of hospitality, and was never more happy than when he had his house filled with guests. He had written two or three novels before he published 'A Daughter of Heth,' but though each of them in its turn received full recognition from the critics, and although everyone who had eyes to see could see that success was assuredly before him, he never got quite hold of the public until he issued anonymously 'A Daughter of Heth.' From that time his way was clear before him. He had opened a new chapter in the art of fiction, the novel which blended Highland scenery with Lowland, and especially with London men and women. 'Black can paint atmosphere,' a great painter once said to me. Black appreciated his success, enjoyed it, and turned it to good account.

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I have never met anyone who more thoroughly understood what he wanted to have in life. Most literary men who have begun as journalists find an almost fatal attraction about the journalist's life which is ever and anon luring them back to the work of a newspaper, whether it be the writing of leading articles or the composition of criticism or the exciting work of a war correspondent. Only the other day I happened to read an essay by my old friend David Christie Murray which illustrated feelingly and accurately the manner in which one thus taken with this love of journalism drags at each remove a lengthening chain when he tries to get away from the work of a newspaper. William Black was governed by no such feeling. His taste was for novel-writing, and when once he had accomplished a success in that field which promised to be lasting, he withdrew from journalism and never felt the slightest inclination to return to it. It was the same with him in all his ways. He loved yachting, and shooting over Highland moors, and a house by the sea, and the companionship of his friends, and he gave himself up to these enjoyments and sought for nothing else. He was eminently a social man, but the society he cared for was only that of the men and women whom he liked and with whom he felt at home. For what is called society in the conventional sense he cared little or nothing. He was very popular in West End society, when he cared to go there, but he seldom did care to go there, and it did not give him the slightest pleasure or feeling of pride to see his name among the list of guests at a dinner-party in a fashionable house. He was fond of art, and loved picture galleries and picture exhibitions, indeed he had studied painting, and thought at one time of devoting himself to the pencil altogether.

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But his instincts drew him to literature, and in especial to that craft of novel writing in which he made so distinct a success. He enjoyed travel sometimes, and had gone over great part of Europe, especially in the south-east, and had crossed into Egypt. He had seen the Parthenon and had seen the Pyramids. He visited the United States, and much enjoyed the cordial welcome which he met with in such cities as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. It gave him pleasure to meet a really great man, and he often spoke with delight of some happy opportunities he had of meeting and conversing with Mr. Gladstone. But he did not go out of his way to seek an introduction to anyone, and the society of the friends he loved would always have been enough for him. He could tell a good story, and he could listen to one. He was brimming over with humour, and had quick vivid powers of observation; and nobody had a happier art for keeping a bright conversation going. He had a thoroughly sympathetic nature and a kindly heart. I have heard again and again, by mere chance, stories which are absolutely true about Black's earnestness and generosity in lending a helping hand to poor brothers of the literary craft who had failed in their efforts or who had not yet succeeded — stories which were not told to me by Black himself or by any of his relations, but which reached my ears only from those who had had the practical benefit of his sympathy.

I reckon Black among the happiest men I have known, and I reckon him also among the men who best deserved to be happy. He had an intense faculty for enjoyment, and his best joys were easily within reach of a man with such tastes as his. Where rose the mountains, especially the Scottish mountains, there to him

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were friends. Where rolled the ocean, or the lake, or the river, especially the Highland lake or river, thereon was his home. He loved the reading of books, that is, of books that were literary and poetic, and that dealt with the heart, and the emotions and the common life of ordinary men and women; and he loved to study life for itself, and could find subjects for mental pictures in a London street as well as in a ruined castle. He ordered his life so that his literary capacity should have its best chance of working out its way. He told me himself, that for a long time he had worked only two hours each day, and that not by any means every day in the week, and while he was working he wanted absolute seclusion and silence, and those around him made arrangement that he should have his desire. But I need hardly say that the two hours on the appointed working days did not by any means represent the whole of Black's literary labour. He carried his work about with him a great deal. When he had a story in his mind he wrought at it mentally, putting it together and building it up, shaping his characters, and thinking out what they were to do and say, while he was walking or driving through London streets or lounging by the sea, or standing on the deck of a yacht. Each day's writing was therefore to him but the reducing to written order of the material which he had been forming in his mind during hours and days of what a chance companion might have thought mere idleness. I am much inclined to believe that while he may have seemed, even to some of his friends, to be leading a life of ease and of joyousness, he was in reality rather over-taxing his physical powers by the constant exercise of all his mental faculties. But of course this mental work too was in itself an enjoyment to him. He lived a great deal with the

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people of his books, and he loved their companionship as he loved the companionship of his real and living friends. On the whole I do not think that the brotherhood of letters in our time can boast a purer fame than that of the man who reopened Scotland to Southron readers after the death of Walter Scott had closed the volume for the time.

Many years have passed since the days when I began to wonder when the English writer was to come up who should do for India that which Pierre Loti, Hector France, and other writers have done for Algeria. I had then been reading with deep interest the works of Pierre Loti, Hector France, and other Frenchmen, and while I found much in them that was not congenial with my own literary tastes, I could not but see that these writers had made modern Algeria a living, brilliant, curious reality for all readers of our time. Nothing of the kind, it seemed to me, had then been done for India. Of course, we have had whole libraries of books about India. We had, to begin with, James Mill's History, which John Bright said every new Viceroy of India carried with him under his arm as he drove to get on board the steamer for his first visit to his Indian dominions. We had histories of India and of Indian provinces and of Indian race, by the dozen. We had Sir George Trevelyan's brilliant, picturesque, faithful story of Cawnpore. We had Kaye and Malleeson. We had many novels about India, and volumes of sketches, and, indeed, the Indian nabob had become something like a positive nuisance in our fiction and on our stage, and yet no writer seemed to have brought home to the English mind the vivid realities, the characteristic peculiarities of the Englishman's life in India. One day I took up by chance a paper-bound volume published in India, and

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I lighted on a chapter of a story by an author whose name I had never heard before. The story was all about Englishmen, and Irishmen, and Scotchmen in India, about barrack life and civil life, about natives and strangers. At first I did not seem attracted to the pages, and was inclined to put them down with the thought that I had seen a good deal of that sort of thing already. I read a little more, however, and soon became fascinated, and felt that I had not seen any of that sort of thing already, and then the conviction grew upon me that here, at last, was the man I had been long expecting, and that the life of the Englishman in India was revealed by the touch of this new enchanter's wand. I need hardly say that the enchanter was Rudyard Kipling. Delighted with what I supposed to be my discovery, I went among my friends, telling them that the man for whom I had long been looking out had come at last, the man who was to show us what English life looked like and felt like in India. Some of my friends had heard of Rudyard Kipling already, and had formed for themselves just the same opinions that I had come to form. To others the very name of the author was new. But only a very short time elapsed before the whole English-speaking world had recognised him as a new influence in literature.

I remember being immensely impressed by his 'Phantom Rickshaw.' I read the story while I was making a short stay at one of the Riviera settlements, and I well remember how my friends and I discussed that 'Phantom Rickshaw,' and compared impressions about it, and went into raptures over it again and again, and forgot for the moment the Mediterranean, and the Esterils, and the orange groves. Not long after this I had the pleasure of meeting Rudyard Kipling himself

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for the first time. We met in London. We had some friends in common. We had dinners and talks together. What first and most especially impressed me about the young writer—he was a very young man then, he is a young man now—was the fact that he seemed utterly unspoiled by his sudden and great success. I do not know that any writer in our recent days has come into popularity so great by so rapid a spring as Rudyard Kipling did. But the success did not appear in the slightest degree to have thrown him off his balance. There was no affectation about him, not even the affectation which tries to ignore one's own success and to make believe that there is really nothing in it. Kipling talked with us frankly about his books, and about the hit they had made, and appeared all the more modest and all the less self-conceited because he never seemed to have in his mind any idea of trying to assure us that there was no self-conceit in him.

Some time after my first acquaintance with Rudyard Kipling, I met at an English country house a man who had made for himself a most distinguished name in one of the departments of Indian administration. We talked about Kipling, and of course we both admired his writings, but my new acquaintance expressed some wonder at the fact that I had not found myself out of harmony with most of Kipling's ideas on Indian subjects. Then I remembered that my companion in this conversation had held strong and decided views on certain questions of Indian administration, and that he justly looked on me as one likely to be in sympathy with his views, and it occurred to me for the first time that very likely Rudyard Kipling was of a different way of thinking. Up to that moment I had not concerned myself in the slightest degree as to what Rudyard Kipling's theories

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might be about this or that department of Indian rule, or indeed as to whether he had any theories on the subject at all. To me he was the delightful painter of life and manners in India; the painter whose touch was never heavy and whose colours were never dull; the spirit-stirring ballad-singer; the humourist and the realist who could sometimes dream dreams and see visions; the delightful companion who could talk about everything, and whom it never occurred to me to catechise about his views as to Indian administration. I was reminded of this conversation only the other day, when I read in a newspaper, at a time when all the civilised world were waiting with utmost anxiety for every scrap of news that came from Kipling's sick-chamber in New York, that England admired Kipling because he was such a splendid Imperialist. Well now, I could hardly venture to speak for England on that or any other subject, but I doubt very much whether the vast majority of Kipling's admirers in England admired him because he was a splendid Imperialist or troubled themselves to think whether he was or was not an Imperialist, or knew any more than I do what an Imperialist exactly is. It would be a poor conceit indeed if we were to get into our minds that before we admire a man of genius we ought to find out whether his opinions on all manner of extraneous subjects are precisely in conformity with our own.

David Deans in Walter Scott's 'Heart of Midlothian' declares that he would refuse to swallow the medicine given him by a physician until he had first satisfied himself that the physician was thoroughly in accordance with him on all questions of religious belief. But few of us are inclined to carry our principles quite so far as sturdy David Deans carried his, and so I accorded my

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full admiration to Rudyard Kipling, without waiting to consider whether he and I would have governed India in exactly the same way if the task had been entrusted to our hands. During my pleasant intercourse with Kipling it was my good fortune to know his late brother-in-law, Wolcott Balestier, and Miss Balestier, who is now Mrs. Rudyard Kipling. Balestier was a young man of singular and varied intellectual gifts, with a sweet and lovable nature and a mind full of interest in all questions of literature and art. I felt certain he had a distinguished career opening on him, but the career was cut short by an untimely death. Kipling and he seemed to be bound together by a thoroughly fraternal affection, and I am sure that the heart of the great and still rising author must have been cruelly pained by the calamity which lost him such a friend. Often when reading the telegrams which told us in England, almost from hour to hour, how heroically Mrs. Kipling bore up while her husband lay to all appearance at the point of death, and how she bore up bravely still, and tried to seem cheerful when the turning-point had just been barely reached, and she had to put on an appearance of cheerfulness in order, for his sake, to keep from him the tidings of the new grief that had fallen on them, my mind went back to those old days when we used to meet the brother and the sister and the friend in London, and when all the future seemed bright before them. I have not seen Rudyard Kipling since those days. He took up his residence at a town in Vermont with which I am well acquainted, and where I spent many pleasant days. and since his stay in America it was not my good fortune to meet him. But I am not likely to forget any of the hours which my son and daughter and I passed in his company during that

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visit of his to London, when we saw him for the first time. Rudyard Kipling knows now, as he never could have known before, how strong is the hold which his genius and his character have taken on the admiration and the sympathy of the whole civilised world. As I have said, he is still but a young man — many a famous author had not made his first success at Kipling's present time of life — and we all look forward with full confidence to his assertion of still further claims on our admiration and our gratitude.

CHAPTER XLIII

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE

I HAVE written and published so much about Mr. Gladstone already that I think it only fair to my readers to begin this chapter by the announcement that I shall endeavour, so far as possible, to avoid saying over again here anything that I have said before in other pages. With this wholesome object in view I shall abstain from anything like an appreciation of Mr. Gladstone's greatness as a statesman, as an orator, and as a Parliamentary leader. I shall take it for granted that on all that relates to Mr. Gladstone's greatness my readers and I are thoroughly in accord, and that there is nothing for me to say here. My only desire is to put together a few reminiscences of my casual association with Gladstone which I have not already published, and which may, because of him, have some interest for the world.

I have many recollections of Mr. Gladstone drawn from my experiences as a journalist in Liverpool from 1853 to the close of 1859. My occupations then took me very often to Chester and to the neighbourhood of Hawarden Castle and to Manchester, and Mr. Gladstone of course often visited Liverpool. The first great speech I ever heard him deliver was in Manchester, on the occasion of the unveiling of a statue of Sir Robert Peel, on October 12, 1853. The same day there was a banquet given at the official residence of the Mayor, where

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Gladstone again delivered a speech, and thus I had the opportunity of hearing him deliver two powerful and thrilling addresses within the course of a few hours. The impression made upon me by Mr. Gladstone as an orator is still fresh and clear in my mind. I am glad, for my own sake, to be able to recall the fact that I thought of him then exactly as I think of him now, and the conviction settled in my mind that I was listening to one of the greatest speakers I had ever heard or was ever likely to hear. After that time I heard Mr. Gladstone speak in the Collegiate Institution, Liverpool, and in other public buildings; and a little later in St. George's Hall, also in Liverpool, which had then been but newly opened to the public. One speech which I heard him deliver was made immediately after the news had reached England of the death of Sir Henry Havelock, whose brilliant services during the Indian Mutiny had made him one of the world's heroic figures. Gladstone in his speech told the meeting some anecdotes of the early days of Sir Henry Havelock, and told among other things that Havelock when a boy at school had so distinguished himself by the great thoughtfulness of his manner, by his solemn studious habits, and by his indifference to all sorts of pastimes, that his schoolfellows nicknamed him 'Old Phloss,' meaning thereby Old Philosopher, and Gladstone drew a brilliant contrast between the supposed character of this precociously and preternaturally grave and sedentary student and the soldier of daring energy, tireless activity, and inexhaustible expedients who had redeemed the Imperial forces from overwhelming disaster in India.

In the late autumn of 1855 Mr. Gladstone delivered an address in Chester having for its subject 'Our Colonial Empire.' I attended the lecture with a Liver-

pool colleague, in order to publish a report of it in 'The Northern Daily Times' of Liverpool. Mr. Gladstone's address impressed me so much at the time that I thought it a great pity it should not have some more abiding record than that afforded by the columns of a provincial daily newspaper. I knew, moreover, that as we Liverpool reporters had to get back to Chester as soon as the address was over, and to begin our work of writing out at a late hour of the night, with the necessity of publication early next morning, there would be very little likelihood of our being able to give a complete report, and such report as we could give would in all probability contain some more or less serious inaccuracies. So I conceived a bold and bright idea, and I take leave to proclaim that the idea was absolutely my own, and that I decline to admit any copartnership in it. The idea was that I should obtain from Mr. Gladstone permission to publish in some permanent form a complete report of his address revised and corrected by himself. I had had experience enough of public speakers to feel quite certain, from the manner in which Mr. Gladstone delivered his address, that the address was what might be called extemporaneous — that the orator had nothing more than a few notes or headings at most to guide him in his discourse, and that he had no written copy of the oration which he could supply to a publisher. I felt at the time that my idea was somewhat audacious, the idea of prevailing on a man so eminent as Mr. Gladstone to assist me in my ambitious scheme of publishing my report in permanent form and as an authorised version, with his own corrections and revision, and with the name of myself and my colleagues emblazoned on its front. However, I took courage, and I wrote to Mr. Glad-

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stone a letter describing my project, and asking for his approval and co-operation. I received, to my great delight, a prompt and most courteous reply from Mr. Gladstone. It bore date Hawarden Castle, November 14, 1855. Mr. Gladstone acknowledged my request in very gracious words, and then said that 'though I rather shrink from the kind of labour,' such as the revision would entail, he would by no means decline the request without asking for information on two points. 'First, is it likely that there will be any demand for such a lecture in the form of a pamphlet?' and next whether any other paper contained a longer report than the 'Northern Daily Times,' 'since I can very little trust my memory, nor have I any bulky notes which could render me assistance.' On November 21, 1855, I received another letter from Mr. Gladstone from Hawarden Castle, acknowledging the first instalment of the full report, and then followed some words which filled the hearts of myself and my colleague with a not ignoble pride. 'If I may judge from this portion, the address (as I think we had better call it, for, in fact, it was hardly a lecture) has been very well reported indeed.'

Later still, when the report was actually completed, I received another letter from Mr. Gladstone, in which he said: 'I have much pleasure in stating that as far as my limited experience in dealing with reports of speeches enables me to judge, your report of my recent address at Chester was executed in the most satisfactory and creditable manner.' The report of the address was published in pamphlet form by a London publishing house — that of Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., I think — and it was, as may easily be imagined, noticed a good deal by the newspapers. I

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must confess, however, that my own personal pride and that of my colleague were entirely concerned in our own part of the work, and that we felt much more elated by Mr. Gladstone's kindly words about the accuracy of our report than Mr. Gladstone himself was at all likely to feel from any praise which the public might have given to his statesmanlike address.

I remember very well the personal appearance of Mr. Gladstone in those days to which I refer. He was still only in the prime of life, and was decidedly handsome, with a profusion of dark hair. I must say, however, that Mr. Gladstone has been an exception to all that I have known in my experience of men, for he grew distinctly handsomer as he grew older. At the time when I first became familiar with his personal appearance there was, except for the wonderful eyes, not much in his features to distinguish him greatly from other fine-looking men of about the same age. It was in his later days that his face developed those noble outlines and his eyes showed that penetrating light which fastened at once the gaze of every observer. A stranger utterly unacquainted with his appearance, seeing him for the first time among whatever crowd of men, would be sure to rivet his looks upon him and to ask eagerly, 'Who is that?' I have seen some few, very few, men's faces which had something like the same power of compelling attention. Nathaniel Hawthorne, the great American novelist, was one of them. Nobody could come into a crowded room where Nathaniel Hawthorne was one of the company without instantly finding himself attracted by Hawthorne's face, and especially by his eyes, and without instantly asking who he was. But then Nathaniel Hawthorne did not live to anything like the age at

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which Mr. Gladstone's presence began to be most impressive, striking, and captivating. I have often when looking at him been reminded of a description given by the late Henry Crabb Robinson of Goethe, whom he had frequently seen in Weimar. Crabb Robinson said that Goethe seemed to him an almost oppressively handsome man. The same thought has occurred to me many times when looking on Mr. Gladstone, that he was almost oppressively handsome in the sense that you could not get his face out of your mind while he was present. Crabb Robinson also remarked that while you were in the same room with Goethe his eyes appeared to rest upon you all the time. I have again and again observed the same peculiarity in Gladstone. Even in a crowded House of Commons, and when one was sitting on a distant bench, one could not escape from the fascination of those wonderful eyes. The effect seemed to grow more and more with his growing years. I felt the impressiveness of those eyes more when I saw them for the last time than I did when I saw them for the first time forty years before.

During my first stay in New York, which lasted from the autumn of 1868 to the late spring of 1870, I used to write regularly for 'The New York Independent,' a paper to which I have been contributing, off and on, up to the present time, and with which I hope still to keep up my connection. I had an opportunity of advocating regularly in the columns of 'The Independent' Mr. Gladstone's policy with regard to the Irish State Church, and his first attempts to introduce legislation for the reform of the Irish Land Tenure system. During my stay in New York I often met and talked with the Irish political exile John Mitchel, the most formidable of all the men who were

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engaged in the Young Ireland movement which led to the rebellion of 1848. Mitchel was, as I have said before in these pages, a man of great intellect and of high literary culture, who might have made a fame as a writer if he could have devoted himself to writing as an art. In one conversation I had with Mitchel our talk turned on the efforts which some leading Englishmen were then making to establish through Parliament a better system of legislation for Ireland. Mitchel told me gravely that he regarded Gladstone and Bright as the worst enemies Ireland ever had. He quickly proceeded to explain his idea, and to show that he was not endeavouring to talk paradoxes. He thoroughly admitted the just and beneficent purpose which animated both men, and he spoke of the men themselves with genuine admiration. But his fixed creed was that the worst evil destiny could inflict on Ireland would be an entire and contented absorption into the system of Imperial rule. Therefore he insisted that it would be better for Ireland in the end to be governed by tyrannical English statesmen who would force her into rebellion, and thus give her a chance, in some foreign complication, of achieving her absolute independence, than to be prevailed upon by well-intentioned legislation to consent to a perpetual partnership with England. It was in that sense and that only he spoke — so he assured me — when he described Gladstone and Bright as the most dangerous enemies Ireland ever had. I asked him if he had any objection to my making his views known to Mr. Gladstone, and he said that he had none whatever, because much as he dreaded the effects of Mr. Gladstone's policy, he did not wish to be regarded as one who accused Mr. Gladstone of anything but friendly inten-

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tions towards Ireland according to his lights. I wrote to Mr. Gladstone, and gave him an account of the conversation, very much as I have given it now in these pages, and I received from him a kindly acknowledgment of my letter, and an acknowledgment that certainly did not seem to convey the idea that his purposes towards Ireland were in any degree likely to be affected by Mitchel's judgment as to their possible effect upon the fortunes of Ireland. Indeed, I for myself regarded Mitchel's expression of opinion as the highest tribute of praise that could be given to the purposes which Gladstone and Bright had in view when opening the new chapter of England's policy in her dealings with the Irish people.

In later years I had many opportunities of meeting Mr. Gladstone. He was always very kind to me, and often invited me to dine with him. When I became a member of the House of Commons he was very kind and courteous to me, and more than once went out of his way to give an encouraging word when I had said, in a speech, anything which seemed to him worthy of notice. This was all the more generous and gracious on his part, because for some years the Irish Nationalist party was thrown into an attitude of constant antagonism to that one of his administrations which came into power in the spring of 1880. Those were the years of continuous obstruction, and Mr. Gladstone felt very deeply, I have reason to know, the attitude taken up by the Irish Nationalist members. He had abolished the Irish State Church, he had brought in the first measure of genuine reform in the Irish Land Tenure system, he knew that some of us thoroughly understood his just and beneficent purposes with regard to Ireland, and he felt disappointed, no doubt, because despite of all that he had done we still

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were compelled to maintain our policy of opposition. He did not, perhaps, at the time quite understand, as he afterwards came to understand, the difficulties by which we were surrounded. His measure of Land Reform had not gone far enough to relieve the Irish peasantry from the local despotism that oppressed them, and he did not understand how the system of government by Dublin Castle made it sometimes impossible for the best intentions on the part of a Prime Minister to find a correct interpretation among the Irish people. Long after the days of that Parliamentary obstruction Mr. Gladstone told me frankly again and again that he had in many instances been overborne, against the teachings of his better judgment, by the incessant assurances from Dublin Castle that law and order could not be maintained in Ireland, that life and property could not be secured for an hour, if the most rigid system of coercion and of arbitrary arrest were not kept up. I think I am not wrong in saying that Mr. Gladstone felt disappointed with me in particular because I had thoroughly identified myself with that policy of Parliamentary obstruction. Most of the other Irish Nationalist members were personally strangers to him, and he had no means of judging whether they did or did not understand the reality of his beneficent intentions towards Ireland. Of me he had known something. I had been brought within touch of him in many a political movement; he had read some of my writings and spoken to me of them, and he knew perfectly well that I at least understood his intentions and his purposes. Therefore I am inclined to believe that he felt especially disappointed at the part I had taken, and could not, at the time, quite understand how it was that I came to associate myself with a policy of such absolute antagonism.

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I only speak of all this for the purpose of saying that my admiration of Mr. Gladstone's personal character was only increased by the knowledge it brought home to me of that quality of generous sensitiveness in him which had so much of the heroic in it, and which distinguished him always from the merely practical statesman who regards the ordinary member of Parliament only as a mechanical figure that is pushed through a certain lobby.

I may perhaps be excused if I venture to introduce a personal anecdote which cannot be told without something like an apology. During one of our vehement debates on Irish administration, I made a speech which closed with a direct personal appeal to Mr. Gladstone. I appealed to him, to his generous instincts, to his well-proved sympathies with the cause of any oppressed nationality, and called upon him to follow his own impulses, to come out of the old routine track of merely mechanical statecraft, and to do justice to Ireland. Such a course I declared would win for a man with his nature a triumph that would be worth dying for; and then I broke away and concluded with the eloquent words, 'and more, it would be worth having lived for!' and thereupon I resumed my seat. Now I have boldly called these words eloquent, and so they were, and I may say so without any modest scruples, for unfortunately the eloquent words were not mine. Let me do myself justice, however; I fully believed, at the time, that they were mine and belonged to no one else. Let me explain how this came about. One of the many things which I never could do was to prepare a speech or lecture or spoken address of any kind. Long before I entered the House of Commons I had become satisfied that the gift of preparing a speech was denied to me. I

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knew perfectly well that great speeches are not to be made without preparation of some kind, and was therefore fully possessed with the knowledge that the making of great speeches was entirely beyond the range of my utmost artistic hopes. Whatever I wanted to say must be said on the spur of the moment; whatever I could do in that way was the best I could do at all, and nothing else was open to me. Now, I had had a good deal of miscellaneous reading, and have a good memory for anything that impresses me, although not a precise memory as to the origin of everything that is thus impressive. So while I was firing off my appeal to Mr. Gladstone the closing passage came into my mind, and I sent it forth on the spur of the moment, honestly believing that it was my own thunder. Mr. Gladstone replied at once, and while he dealt very severely with the arguments I had used, he made a very gracious allusion to the words of genuine eloquence with which I had brought my speech to a close. Several of my friends, and many members of the House with whom I had not particular acquaintance, afterwards offered me their kindly congratulations on the compliment which Mr. Gladstone had paid to my concluding words. I felt quite delighted and proud, and it was not until after some days had passed that the terrible truth suddenly rose up in my mind. The words of my final appeal come from the mouth of Claverhouse in Walter Scott's 'Old Mortality.' I hurriedly looked out the book and turned to the particular scene, and — yes, there they were, the words of Graham of Claverhouse which had been floating in my memory vaguely, for I do not know how many years, and at last floated up just at the wrong moment and were innocently given out by me as that moment's inspiration. No critic discovered the uninten-

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tional fraud: very likely no critic took the trouble of reading the speech; but I made full confession of the unintentional imposture to Mr. Gladstone on the first convenient opportunity, and he was greatly amused, accepted my confession as sincere, and consoled me by telling me of several other instances coming within his own knowledge in which a speaker, without the least purpose of fraud, had used as his own the words of some other man which had impressed themselves on his memory.

All through this long obstruction campaign I must say that some of us Irishmen thoroughly understood Mr. Gladstone's generous purposes with regard to Ireland. For myself, if I had wanted any special assurance on the subject, it would have been given to me when Mr. Gladstone appointed Mr. George Otto Trevelyan to be Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. I was not then as well acquainted with George Trevelyan as I afterwards came to be, but I had always watched his career with close interest, had admired his high literary capacity, and had known how generous and sympathetic was his nature, and how instinctive was the feeling which led him to champion the oppressed weak against the oppressing strong. At that time I can well remember that I rather grudged Trevelyan to the House of Commons. I felt so much admiration for his literary work that I thought it a pity he should not keep to that particular path of life which seemed best suited to bring out all that was best in him. I remember, indeed, on one occasion, when it was understood that he was about to take office under Mr. Gladstone, arguing the point with him, and doing my utmost to persuade him that he ought to remain a private member of the House, refuse office of every kind, and go on with his *Life of Fox*.

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Mr. Gladstone, however, understood Trevelyan's great capacity for political life better than I did, and saw that he was capable of doing valuable work in office. Mr. Gladstone could have given no better proof of his confidence in Trevelyan than by offering to him the most difficult post of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Of late years I confess I am selfish enough to regret that Trevelyan has given up the House of Commons. He had proved by his administrative capacity as well as by his eloquence in debate that he was not merely a brilliant literary man in Parliament, but a man of genuine Parliamentary and administrative ability, who could also write brilliant books. To return, however, to my immediate subject, I may say that I cordially accepted the appointment of George Trevelyan to the Irish Chief Secretaryship as an evidence of Gladstone's earnest determination to lend a willing ear to every just claim that Ireland could make.

As time passed on Mr. Gladstone was growing to understand the Irish people better and better, and the Irish people were growing better and better to understand him. We had come at last to see that our best hope for the future of Ireland rested on his purpose, his intellect, and his noble heart. The idea put about so often that Gladstone had made a rapid and even a sudden conversion to the principle of Home Rule for Ireland is utterly without foundation. I can affirm this of my own positive experience. I know of my own knowledge that so long ago as the early months of 1879 Gladstone was earnestly studying the question of Home Rule with a wish to be satisfied on two main points: first, whether Home Rule was really desired by the great majority of the Irish people, and next whether a scheme of Home Rule could be constructed which could

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satisfy the claims of Ireland without imperilling the safety and the stability of the Empire. I had many conversations with Mr. Gladstone on these subjects during the years that followed, and I saw that his convictions were slowly but steadily growing until they expressed themselves at last in his Home Rule measure of 1886. Mr. Gladstone's feelings towards Ireland and Irishmen always seemed to be generous and sympathetic. During the bitterest days of the obstruction struggle he never, so far as I know, said anything that was harsh or inconsiderate with regard to those of us who most strongly opposed his government. He may have been disappointed, as I have said, but in his disappointment there was nothing ungenerous, nothing vindictive, nothing even unreasonable. His son Herbert Gladstone always showed the most thorough sympathy with the Irish movement and with the condition of the suffering Irish tenantry, and I hope I may say, without breach of confidence, that to my own knowledge the sufferings of the Irish tenantry found an active sympathiser in Mrs. Gladstone.

There can hardly ever have been, I suppose, a busier man than Mr. Gladstone during the last twenty years of his life. In addition to all his administrative and Parliamentary work he was constantly taking on himself all manner of other public engagements, literary work, social work, and mental excursions into this or that department of intellectual life and research wholly unconcerned with the routine business of his life. Yet he always seemed able to spare time for the purpose of doing quickly some kindly action. I remember once being deeply interested in the case of a friend of mine who had been at one time concerned in a publishing business, but who had been compelled by ill-health to

give up all personal attention to the management of the concern, and had fallen in consequence on days of distress. Mr. Gladstone was then Prime Minister, and I thought it possible that something might be done for my poor old friend out of the Literary Fund which is placed at the disposal of the Crown. The case, however, was somewhat peculiar. My friend had not been a literary man, but only a publisher, and it was not certain that the fund at the disposal of the Crown could be applied to such a case. On the other hand, my friend had so much of a peculiar claim on the public that he brought out, on his own judgment and at his own risk, a remarkably large number of new authors and authoresses who but for his enterprise and energy might have had to wait much longer for the success which they promptly attained. I wrote a letter to Mr. Gladstone pointing out all these facts and submitting the case for his consideration. I wrote the letter in one of the lobbies of the House of Commons, and as Mr. Gladstone was seated on the Treasury Bench, I crossed the floor of the House and handed the letter to him. An important debate was going on, and I naturally assumed that Mr. Gladstone would merely glance at the letter, then put it in his pocket, and answer it at his leisure. Soon after I noticed that Mr. Gladstone was writing incessantly while seated on the Treasury Bench, and I took it for granted that he was making notes of some important passages in the debate with a view to an early reply. But before very long I received from him across the floor of the House a letter written on the spur of the moment in answer to my appeal. In the midst of his work, and while still attending, I have no doubt, to the debate then going on, he had been able to spare time and attention to send me a reply to my

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request. In his letter he went fully into the whole subject, pointed out the difficulties that lay in the way of establishing anything like a new principle, and gave me his assurance that the matter would have his careful consideration, and that if anything could be done it should have his recommendation. I only introduce this little anecdote to show how remarkable was the kindness of the man who under such conditions could find time to write a full reply then and there, rather than put off an answer until the arrival of some less busy and more convenient hour. I wonder how many of us under the like circumstances would have been considerate and kind enough to undertake the task of an immediate response to a mere request which had no political, and indeed no pressing, purpose to call for an instant answer.

On another occasion, and while a somewhat important political crisis was impending, I received one day a letter in Mr. Gladstone's handwriting. I opened it eagerly and anxiously, assuming that a letter from such a man at such a time must have to do only with Parliamentary affairs or public affairs of some kind. I found that it contained a kindly acknowledgment of a book which Mr. Seeley the publisher had sent to Mr. Gladstone at my suggestion. The book was called 'The Grey River,' and contained a large number of illustrations and etchings of famous buildings and picturesque spots on the Thames within easy reach of the bridges. The illustrations were the work of Mr. Mortimer Menpes, and the letterpress was the work of Mrs. Campbell Praed and myself. I had asked Mr. Seeley to send an early copy of the volume to Mr. Gladstone, and I was not quite certain when I received his letter that the book had yet reached him. I found that the letter was an acknowledgment of the receipt of the book and contained no

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allusion whatever to immediate Parliamentary affairs. After a few words about the volume itself, words full of courtesy and kindness, Mr. Gladstone went on to say: 'I have in a small way collected books about the great City whose noble waterway (I think quite unsurpassed) you have been commemorating. Some day I yet hope to show you them here, if that party of your countrymen and coadjutors for which I have been so long angling shall ever be a reality. The stars have thus far been against me. I rejoice to think that in other and greater points the Irish cause prospers.' And then with a few words the letter closed. The party to which Mr. Gladstone referred was the projected visit of some of my friends and myself to see him at Hawarden. I cannot but think it was a characteristic act of kindness on his part to give attention to such a subject, and find time for such a letter, in the midst of occupations the most pressing and the most anxious. These occupations might well have excused him at so momentous a period from the work of letter-writing, or at all events from the work of anything but the briefest acknowledgment, when the mere acceptance of our book would naturally be regarded as a high compliment by those who had produced it. These are only random instances out of many which it would be in my power to mention, to illustrate the singular kindness and thoughtfulness which enabled Mr. Gladstone to put aside the gravest occupations in order to make time for some expression of genial courtesy, good will, and what I may call artistic sympathy.

Everyone remembers the comments that were made both here and in America on Mr. Gladstone's famous speech during the course of the American Civil War, in which he expressed his opinion that Jefferson Davis

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had made an army, had made a navy, and, more than that, had made a nation. Everyone remembers, too, how readily and how clearly Mr. Gladstone explained his views with regard to the American Union, and showed how curiously they had been misinterpreted by some on both sides of the Atlantic. I have a distinct recollection of a conversation I had with Mr. Gladstone and the emphasis with which he declared to me that he had never asserted, and had never intended to assert, that he believed in the failure of American institutions. He reminded me that a member of Parliament, the late Sir John Ramsden, had said during a debate in the House of Commons that the Republican bubble had burst in the United States, and that he himself, following Sir John Ramsden in the same debate, had strongly dissented from and emphatically condemned any such expression of opinion. He went on to say that, even if the War of Secession had ended in permanent separation, or if any such separation were at any future time to occur, such a fact would not of itself tend in the slightest degree to prove the failure of the institutions of the United States. I mention this expression of Mr. Gladstone's views made in private conversation as a further evidence that it had never entered into his mind to believe that all that was best and all that was characteristic and creative in the principles on which the United States were founded, could be reduced to failure, even if an empire or a republic on the basis of slavery were to be set up by the seceding States and on the frontier line of the great free Republic itself. Those who believed Mr. Gladstone hostile to the United States merely because he thought it possible, if he did think it possible, that the Southern States might succeed in setting up for themselves, might well have remembered how many of the most devoted,

loyal, and distinguished citizens of the Northern States were forced at one time to declare that the free Republic would fare all the better if the seceding States were allowed to go, and set up their slavery system for themselves, and thus clear the air of the free Republic from its tainting and enfeebling influence.

I have spoken already in this volume of Mr. Gladstone's splendid powers as a talker. I have read much that has been written by other writers on the subject. I have had many opportunities of hearing him talk and of talking with him at his own house and at other houses, and I rank him among the three or four most captivating and impressive masters of the art of conversation whom it has ever been my good fortune to meet. He never seemed to me to be in any sense an overpowering talker, as he was apparently considered by some others. He never seemed to me a man who was anxious to keep all the talk, or the greater part of the talk, to himself. Indeed, there were times when he impressed me as being somewhat curiously the reverse of all this; for I have more often been struck by his apparent anxiety to get new information or fresh ideas from others than to keep the company listening to any outpourings of his own. I do not think I ever met with a man who was so desirous to learn anything and everything that others could tell to him or teach him. I have often observed Mr. Gladstone listening with the closest interest to men who were full of one subject and who thoroughly understood it, and whom, perhaps, for that very reason, some of us might be inclined to consider bores, but to whom Mr. Gladstone listened simply because they knew something which he did not know, and which he was anxious to learn. I have never known him to monopolise the conversation, or to seem

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eager to monopolise it; and indeed I think that must have been but a poorly gifted company among whom Mr. Gladstone could not find somebody who had something to say that was worth listening to. I found him always remarkably sympathetic in that way. 'I know the man that must hear me,' says Coleridge's Ancient Mariner; 'to him my tale I tell.' But Mr. Gladstone had another and quite different sort of gift; he knew the man who had some tale to tell him, and to that man he could listen. I observed, too, that Mr. Gladstone seemed willing to be drawn out, if I may use such an expression, to be asked for his recollection of this or that public event or this or that public man, and that he was always pleased thus to be led off on some particular subject, instead of pouring out upon the company, in a flood, the thoughts which then were uppermost in his mind. Indeed, it was in that peculiarity that his especial charm and power as a talker seemed to consist. I always felt that Mr. Gladstone was conversing with those who surrounded him, bringing out their ideas and giving them back his ideas in return, and that we, the company, were never in the position of a class harangued by a commanding master. I have the most delightful memories of talks with Mr. Gladstone when I had asked him about his recollections of this or that great man, and he readily drew upon all the resources of his wonderful memory to satisfy me, and brought me, as I felt, into the very presence of the man whom he was describing. As everyone knows, Mr. Gladstone's stock of subjects was all but inexhaustible. Even on purely scientific questions which might naturally be supposed to be out of his range, he had interests and views and ideas which made every sentence he spoke worth remembering. History, theology, letters, art, politics, human life, these were

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subjects which touched the deepest chords of his intellect and of his heart, and on which he never uttered a commonplace. Indeed, I cannot remember that I ever heard him utter a commonplace on any subject in which he took even a passing interest. I think the topics of conversation on which it gave me greatest pleasure to hear him speak were his recollections of great men he had known, and his comments on the poets and prose writers whom he most admired. Homer and Dante, it appeared to me, were the poets whom he turned to with the warmest enthusiasm and held in the highest reverence. Of course he was a devoted student of Shakespeare, and if he were once fairly started on Shakespeare, a listener not previously acquainted with his variety of studies might be led to imagine, for the time, that Shakespeare was Gladstone's one and only poet. I have heard Sir Henry Irving say that Gladstone had in his presence now and then casually introduced two or three lines of Shakespeare, and had delivered them with a justness of emphasis and an exquisite melody of expression which would have done honour to any stage. Among English prose-writers I think Gladstone admired above all the style of Swift, a preference which showed a liberalism of taste as well as accuracy of judgment, when we remember that Gladstone's own style was apt to revel in a prodigality of words. Mr. Gladstone did not seem to me to be drawn so naturally towards German as he was to Italian literature. I have heard him quote from Schiller on two occasions in the House of Commons and in each instance with singularly happy effect, and I can well recollect seeing him an absorbed listener and spectator during Madame Modjeska's performance of Schiller's 'Mary Stuart' in London many years ago.

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I do not think he was enthusiastic about Goethe ; at least, he was not quite so enthusiastic about him as I could have wished him to be. He had, as might easily be imagined, the highest admiration for Walter Scott, and it was a delight to hear him pouring forth his appreciation of some of Scott's scenes and characters. Thackeray, I think I heard him say, he put on a higher level than Dickens, but he rated Dickens very highly too, and could always find delight in his pages. There was in him none of the narrow spirit which so often prevents elder men from appreciating the art and the literature that is coming up in their later days. No young painter or poet or novelist was too new or too young for Gladstone's appreciation, sympathy, and admiration. Among the many acts of kindness for which I am grateful to Mr. Gladstone was the gift he often made to me of an article, or the advance sheets of an article, written by him for one of the periodicals on some subject which he knew was certain to command my interest. Indeed, I could recall almost endless memories of Mr. Gladstone that chronicle acts of courtesy, of good will, of kindness, and of generosity. It was a great good fortune in itself merely to have known such a man. I count it among the happiest of my fortunes. I can pay but a poor tribute to his memory, yet it is a tribute of the sincerest praise, and I have not forgotten that noble line of Persius which closes with the words

admoveam templis, et farre litabo.

I lay my poor grain of tribute on this great man's grave, and can find no better way in which to bring these reminiscences to a close.

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